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CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE

SYNOPTICAL REVIEW.

NEW SERIES, VOL. I.

For 1819.

NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY

1819



THE
CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE

AND
THEOLOGICAL REVIEW.

NEW SERIES.....VOL. I.

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"Speaking the truth in love."—ST. PAUL.

BOSTON:
WELLS AND LILLY, COURT-STREET.

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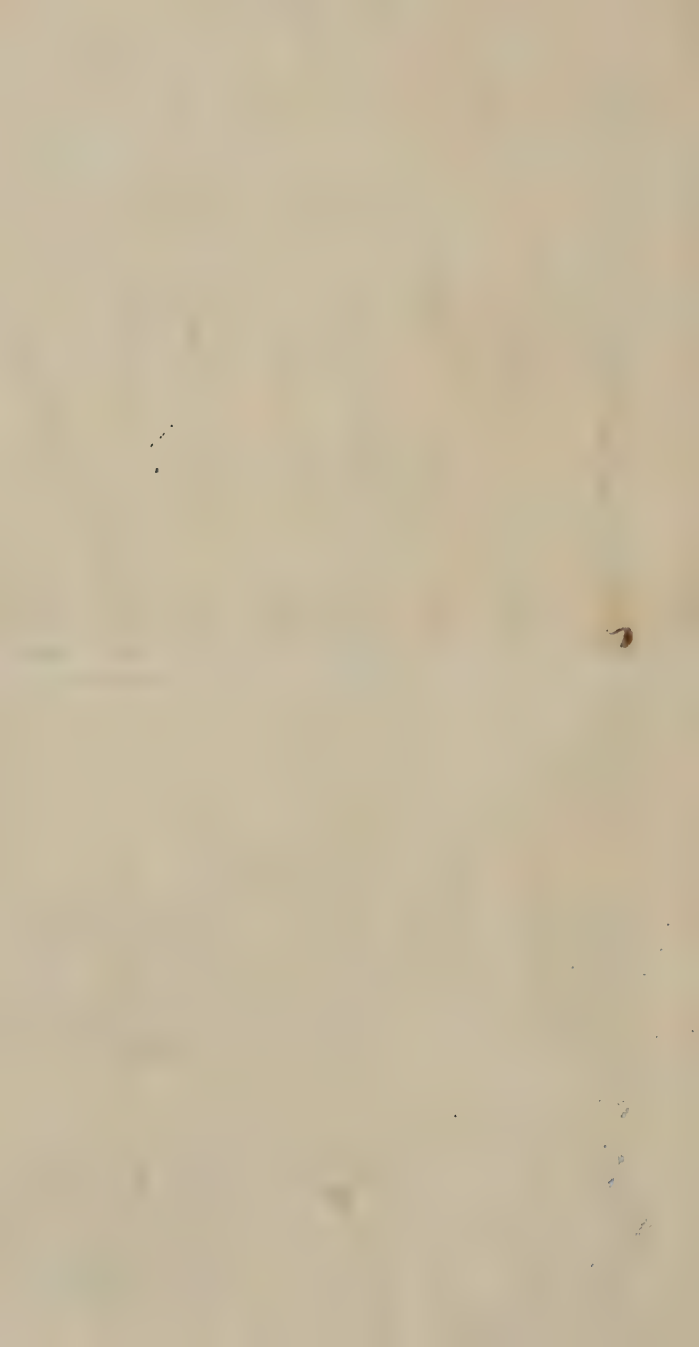
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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 69.

NEW SERIES—NO. 1.

For January and February, 1819.

APOLOGY.

IN the "Review of 1818," which appeared in the No. of this work for December, some remarks and solicitations were introduced, from which it would naturally be inferred, that the writer expected to continue his labours as Editor of the Christian Disciple. It may therefore be proper to say, that such was his expectation at the time of writing the article. But, soon after, his health received a serious injury; and the weight of care and responsibility which bore on him as the editor of *two* periodical works, with little aid on which he could regularly depend, was too oppressive. Besides, he was aware that, at sixty years of age, it was in vain to hope for the vigor and energy of youth; especially in one of impaired health, and who had for many years been devoted to unceasing study and inquiry. He therefore resolved to relinquish the care of the Christian Disciple, and to devote himself solely to the work of promoting peace on earth.

It had indeed been the aim of the editor to make the Christian Disciple subservient to the diffusion of beneficent and pacific sentiments, so far as this might comport with its object as a miscellaneous work; and perhaps he may have exceeded the bounds of propriety in the admission of articles which seemed to him adapted to promote the cause of peace. For he is free to confess, that for several years his mind has been so absorbed by the inquiries which relate to war and peace, that it has often been difficult for him to

New Series—vol. I. 1

write on other subjects. Perhaps this circumstance should have induced him to resign the *Christian Disciple* at an earlier period. But he indulges the hope that nothing has appeared in the work, which will be ultimately injurious to any one; and that the time is approaching, when pacific principles will be more generally and more highly esteemed.

The convictions and impressions under which the *Christian Disciple* has heretofore been conducted, were distinctly and honestly stated in the "Review of 1818." They need not be repeated. It may suffice to add, that it was the aim of the editor to conduct the work in a manner corresponding with its title, "*THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE*," and with its motto, "*Speaking the truth in love.*" He may, however, have been liable to the charge of deviating from the rule that he had prescribed to himself, and for which he may need the forgiveness of God, and the candour of his brethren. Both of which he hopes to obtain.

In cordial friendship with all his associates, and with grateful affection to all his patrons, the past editor of the *Christian Disciple* has resigned the work to the direction of its original proprietors. He is aware that the work is capable of great improvements, and of being enriched with a greater variety of useful articles. He sincerely indulges the hope, that in future it will be conducted with more ability, more prudence, and more of the Christian spirit than has been possessed by him; that it will be the means of illuminating the minds and improving the hearts of many thousands of readers, of uniting the various denominations of Christians in the bonds of that charity which is the end of gospel doctrines and precepts, and that it will thus be the means of preparing multitudes for those regions of light and love, in which party names and distinctions will cease to mar the happiness of man. But whatever shall be the future character of the work, the subscriber is no longer responsible.

NOAH WORCESTER.

January 16th, 1819.

INTRODUCTION. *G. Annin*

THE *Christian Disciple*, though commenced by a particular class of Christians, was intended to be distinguished from similar works, by proposing as its principal object, not the defence of particular opinions, but the spreading of the candid, toler-

ant, and philanthropic spirit of the Gospel. It was believed that the best service which could be rendered to truth, was to bring men's minds into that dispassionate and benevolent frame, which is most congenial with truth. For this purpose, the work was committed to a gentleman distinguished by the mildness as well as ability with which he had conducted theological controversy, and who is universally acknowledged to have laboured with exemplary faithfulness to make the Disciple the minister of peace and kind affections. Unhappily his health, long declining, is now so impaired as to oblige him to discontinue the superintendence of the work.

The publication will hereafter be conducted by several gentlemen, who wish to promote the mild and charitable spirit which distinguished its former editor, but who have thought that its usefulness requires an extension of its original plan. The work will be devoted, as before, to christian charity and practical religion, and at the same time to theological learning, biblical criticism, discussions of the doctrines of natural and revealed religion, and to Reviews of new publications. It will aim to point out the methods and sources of a right interpretation of the Scriptures; to throw light on the obscurities of those ancient records; to state and maintain the leading principles of christianity; to vindicate it from the misrepresentations of friends, and the cavils of enemies; to illustrate its power in the lives of eminent christians; to give discriminating views of evangelical virtue, and of the doctrines most favourable to its growth; to weigh impartially the merits of theological works, and of other books which have a bearing on morals and religion; and to furnish interesting information particularly in regard to the religious condition of the world.

In the present state of this country, periodical works are particularly valuable. We have many men, who can write well, but who want leisure to write volumes; many who think deeply, but whose thoughts will die with them, unless publications like the present shall give them circulation. It is well known that not a few among us spend their lives in theological studies, and it is matter of reproach that nothing more is contributed by us to the stock of just criticism, and of moral and religious truth. It is believed that this reproach may be removed in a degree, by opening new channels for the communication of original and interesting thought, and by multiplying in this way excitements to intellectual activity.

It does not become the conductors of the work to begin their labours with large promises. They will only say, that they wish to serve faithfully the cause of good learning and holy living. Though disposed to express freely their views

of the doctrines which divide christians into parties, they seek a higher good than the building up of a sect. They wish to encourage and aid a serious and upright investigation of truth, and would especially do something towards extending the power of christianity over men's minds and lives, by holding it forth in those rational, and amiable characters in which its Author first delivered it to the world.

WHAT IS FAITH?

THE great importance given to Faith in the New Testament, makes it deeply interesting that we should have the most clear and just conceptions of its meaning, and its objects. It gives unspeakable interest to the inquiry, in every serious mind, is mine the faith required of a christian? What then is that faith, which is a condition of salvation?

Faith, defined generally, signifies the assent of the mind to any proposition or fact, upon suitable testimony. Whenever we believe the testimony to be suitable, and there is no opposing interest or passion to bias our determination, we readily yield our faith to what is proposed to it; and conform our conduct to our *belief* with as strong an assurance, as we should to our *actual knowledge*. I *believe* a physician, of whose skill in his profession I am satisfied, when he tells me that a certain part of my system is diseased; though I neither see the part, nor am sensible of pain in it. I *believe* my friend, in whose veracity I have confidence, when he informs me that he has been a witness of events, of the truth of which I should otherwise have doubted; and I repose all the reliance on his promises, which I can upon his ability to perform them, and upon the continuance of his life. If the question then be settled in our minds, that the Bible contains a revelation from God, it is perfectly reasonable in God to require of us, that we receive whatever *He* has taught, with as firm a persuasion, as if every circumstance and object were actually exposed to our senses. Every perfection of God is here, to my mind, a ground of reliance; and I am guilty of distrusting God, and of practical infidelity, whenever, in my disposition or conduct, I disregard what *He* has taught me, and act in contradiction to what *He* has revealed of his character, His moral government, and His designs in judgment and eternity. I have indeed religious faith in no greater degree, than I have a *perfect assurance that all which God has taught is true, and all that he has promised will be accomplished.*

It may be objected, that many are firmly persuaded of the truths of revelation, or at least, acknowledge these truths without a doubt, who exhibit, and obviously feel little, of their practical influence. There are some also, and I believe not a few, whose faith, as far as it consists in a conviction of the understanding, embraces every doctrine and duty of religion. But its influence is only occasional and partial. They almost every day resolve, but soon forget their resolutions, and are overcome by temptations. They feel that they are thus daily accumulating sins, in a conviction of which, they experience the pangs and the terrors of guilt; and as they are not sensible of weakness, or of deficiency in their faith, they scarcely dare even to hope for improvement. But examine faith as a principle of action in the common affairs of life, and you will perceive that it affects conduct no further, than it obtains an ascendancy over the affections; and through them, a control of our wills. The husbandman who ploughs his field, and sows his grain, acts *by faith*. He *believes*, for he cannot *know*, that by these means he will obtain a harvest. Happily, however, he feels, and he feels strongly, that the support and comfort of himself and his family are essentially connected with these plans and labours. His love of property therefore, his love of life, and of a comfortable subsistence, and his love of his family, all co-operate to affect his will; and to induce him, *in the belief of a harvest*, to prepare his ground, and to sow his seed. And equally in religion, it is only through the affections that the convictions of faith can give a determination to the will, and thus secure a conformity of conduct; for it is *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*.

Nor do these expressions imply merely, that faith, to be effectual, must be sincere. Sincerity, without doubt, is indispensable to the efficacy of faith; but sincerity alone will not secure its efficacy. What wonderful effects, for example, may we reasonably believe would be produced, by a due application only of the doctrines of the omnipresence of God, and of our individual accountableness? Yet who will say, that this due application always follows the sincere belief of these doctrines? For what is sincerity, applied to belief? Does it import any thing more, than that our belief is unmingled with doubt? He who neglects to cultivate his ground, and wastes the time for successful labour in indolence, or squanders it in vice, believes as sincerely that a crop might be secured by industry, as he does, who actually toils to obtain it. But while his affections are otherwise engaged, his sincere belief is even more unproductive, than his uncultivated fields. And so is it

with our religious faith. We must feel our happiness, our very life, to be concerned in it. In the heart, in the affections, is that spring, which sets in motion all our desires, and produces all our actions. Hence said our Lord to the Pharisees, "how can ye, *being evil*, speak good things; for of *the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh*. A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things."

The sentiment is deeply laid in the principles of our nature. When we greatly love an object, we pursue it, while there is a reasonable hope of its attainment. If we cease from the pursuit, while the object may be obtained, it is because some other object has obtained a stronger hold on our affections. And if we cease from fearing that which we once dreaded, and have still equal reason to dread, it is either because our attention and concern are diverted for a time by some other object, in which we have become more interested; or because our hearts have become too much hardened, easily to receive again the impression, by which our fears were excited. If, for example, I believe that I must account to God, and my affections are actually fixed on the things above, I shall certainly seek the objects I hope for in heaven, by endeavouring faithfully to conform my dispositions and conduct to the known will of God. If I relax in my endeavours to act as an accountable being, in the same proportion has some other object taken possession of the affections, which were attached to God and to heaven. Or if I cease from dreading the divine displeasure, (the feeling of having incurred which, once humbled me to the dust, when I knew that I had offended,) it is because I have become more interested in some other object, than the approbation of God; or because my heart resists the impressions, of which it was once so susceptible. The language of the New Testament is conformed to these obvious principles of our nature.* From the *good treasure of a good heart*, good proceeds; and evil from the treasure of an evil heart; for as a man *thinketh in his heart*, whether it be good or evil, so is his character here; and so reason, as well as revelation teaches us, will be his condition hereafter.

But let us not be misunderstood, in attaching this importance to the affections in religion. Let it not be supposed that religion consists only of certain feelings, or of certain affections. The affections are indeed but a part of our moral constitutions.

* See Luke viii. 15. Acts xi. 2, 3. Rom. vi. 17. Heb. x. 22. Heb. xiii. 9.

But they are a most important part. We see their wonderful influence in the common affairs of life. What is the spring of patriotism, but *love of country*? What are the bonds of domestic life, but conjugal, parental and filial love? What is it that characterises the worldly minded man, but his supreme *love of the world*? And what, through all the classes of the vicious, peculiarly distinguishes them, but *love of the peculiar causes*, in which they seek their happiness? Hence, in religion, love is the first and great commandment, because we shall seek the objects and blessings of religion, *only when we love them*. Faith in the mind will be as ineffectual as the winter's snow upon the ground, till, warmed by the affections, it penetrates the thoughts, and spreads its fertilizing power, and awakens desires of piety and virtue, which spring up, and thrive, and bear the imperishable fruits of obedience to God. Faith, without the affections, has been compared to the sun, without its life-giving heat; and it is as true that the affections, without the principles of an enlightened faith, become a consuming fire to the soul. But it is the glory of our religion, that in requiring faith, it fixes it upon the noblest objects that can engage the interests of immortal beings. The objects of our faith are the objects of the love of angels, and of holy spirits, in the abodes of the blessed; objects, of which not one will be disappointed, who sincerely loves, and earnestly seeks them.

From this view of faith, it is apparent, first, that *as a cause, it is equal to all the moral effects ascribed to it in the New Testament*.

Religious faith comprehends all that is unseen in the doctrines of religion; all that is hoped for in its promises. The universal and constant presence of God; His moral government; our responsibility; His mercy revealed to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, on the conditions of the gospel; and a life of eternal union with Himself, and with the good; of everlasting improvement, and of eternally increasing happiness; and indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, if we are disobedient. These are among the objects of which faith gives an equal assurance, as if they were all exposed to the judgment of our senses. And here too are objects of desire and of dread; here are interests, compared with which, all others are as the dust of the balance. See then with what fidelity men pursue the objects of their affections, when those objects are to be seen, and felt, and tasted. And will faith in religion, working by love, will confidence, made perfect by the support of the affections, will the dependence of the heart for its hap-

pineness on the pardon of sin, the eternal favour of God, and the everlasting glories of heaven, be less efficacious? This was the faith which was so triumphant in the days of our Lord and his Apostles; and which, thanks to God, we believe is at this day the treasure, and support, and joy, of unnumbered disciples. With this faith, if we may not remove mountains, we may do that which is infinitely more for our interest and happiness; we may overturn our habits of vice, and destroy their very foundations. If it will not shield us from the natural evils of life, it will do more. It will enable us to bear them without a murmur. It will prepare us for moral enjoyments, pure, substantial, and eternal.

2. From this view of the nature of that faith, to which the gospel promises its great rewards, it is apparent, *why the belief of the doctrines of our religion is so often without influence upon those who receive them.* The truth is, many believe these doctrines, as the rise and fall of the tides is believed by those, whose business is not concerned in them; and who consequently feel no immediate interest in them. Their hearts have little or no concern in their faith. Their affections are on other objects than the favour of God, and the salvation of their souls; and where their hearts are, thither will tend all their actions. This is so plainly a law of our nature, that if our religion had taught us nothing more of faith, than that it must be a principle of holy living, to secure its acceptance in the sight of God, the inference would have been as clear as is the expression, *WITH THE HEART, MAN BELIEVETH UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

3. In this view of the subject we have a rule, by which we may ascertain whether ours is a *living*, a *sanctifying*, and a *purifying faith*. If it be, our treasure is with God in heaven, and *there* are our best affections. If it be, then the objects of our faith, at the same time, are the objects of our *highest interest*. Then we *believe*, and therefore *endure* and *enjoy*, as *seeing Him, who is invisible*. Faith sanctifies the heart, by bringing the affections into the service of God; and the affections, strongly fastened upon the objects of faith, secure its influence upon all our dispositions and conduct. Then only is ours a living faith, when it works by love; for then only will it possess the power, by which we shall be enabled to overcome the world.

Reader, would you possess this faith? Give your affections then to the objects, to which reason, if its voice be heard, not less than religion will excite you. Dwell upon these objects, till your soul kindles with desire of possessing them; till you

feel how comparatively worthless is every possession, every promise of this world. Survey them, as they are seen by the bright light of the word of God; and while you read his word, feel that its interests, its promises, may be yours, if you will obey him. In communion with God, raise your soul to that happy world, in which He resides in his glory; and fix your attention upon his character, upon the character of the friend and saviour of repenting sinners, upon the holy and happy society of the blessed, upon an eternal enjoyment of God and heaven. How can you doubt in what consists the treasure, the supreme good of an accountable and immortal being? How can you give up your heart to the uncertain, the perishable interests of this world, while God, and Christ, and heaven, and eternity, are soliciting your cares, your affections, and your labours! Come Faith, and open the eyes of the blind, and shew them the regions of immortal blessedness. Pour upon their minds thy celestial light, and warm their hearts with thy holy fire. Come Faith, and take possession of our hearts, and be the guide of our affections, till, having accomplished thy work, the vision of God will open upon our souls; and what we now *believe*, will be *known*, and *possessed*, and *enjoyed* forever.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

WHY has God spoken to man by authorized messengers, at sundry times and in divers manners, from the first ages of the world to the promulgation of Christianity? What has been the object of the communications which we have received from the Deity? What is the design of Revelation? Or, to put the question in the form in which we shall attempt to answer it, what is *Religion*? We shall found our reply upon two propositions, which we may readily take for granted, as few will feel a disposition to dispute them, or acknowledge it if they do. The first is, that God created us to be happy. The second is, that the highest, truest, and only source of constant happiness, is virtue. If either of these fundamental propositions be denied, we can proceed no further. If they can be proved to our satisfaction to be false, we shall be obliged to renounce all our opinions and views concerning God, religion and human nature, and adopt entirely new ones, though we cannot at present even conjecture what they would be. At present, therefore, taking them as the foundation of our sentiments respecting

the nature and operations of religion, we proceed to those considerations, which may lead to an answer of the important question, *What is Religion?*

In the first, bare, generic signification of religion, it means the mutual and known relations between God and man. There may be relations between us which neither God has revealed, nor we have discovered. Religion does not include these, from the obvious reason that we cannot at present have any concern with the design or the consequences of that, about which we have no knowledge. Our mutual relations therefore must be known. We are creatures; God is our creator. We are governed; God is our King. We hold nothing by our own power; we are dependent upon some one for life, breath, and support; God is our preserver. We do right and wrong, and are accountable for our actions; God is our Judge. God is almighty, and infinite in wisdom, justice and goodness; we owe him the highest fear, reverence, love, gratitude and obedience. The inductions of our unassisted reason are alone insufficient to direct and guide us in our knowledge of God and of our duty toward him; and God has, at sundry times and in divers manners, revealed to us his character, his will, our prospects, and our duty. Now if religion does not mean these relations, these duties and these communications, what does it mean?

The nature of these relations, these duties and communications, must be determined from the design of God in creating us, and from our capacity and ability of answering that design. This leads us to the proposition, that God created us to be happy. The Deity had certainly some design in giving us life and placing us in this world. Was that design good or evil? Did God create us to be happy or miserable? If he did not create us to be happy, what did he create us for? These questions come home to the good feelings and the common sense of every individual, and return us the answer.—He created us to be happy. It follows that all his dealings, all his communications, all his relations with us, must be productive, either immediately or ultimately, of our happiness.

The next question is, in what does our happiness consist? We mean permanent happiness, happiness as a character of being, that happiness which such a Being as God would choose. I know, and I rejoice, it is ordered by our beneficent Creator, that sources of happiness should spring up without number in the regions of every sense, throughout the wide empire of mind, and in all the stages of our existence. But what constitutes the grand, the pervading, the fundamental pleasure of

life, what is that without which there can be no true enjoyment, no genuine happiness? Ask it of any one. Ask it of your neighbours, of yourselves, of your own observation, of your own convictions and your own consciences. Ask it of the good, and they will tell you that it is virtue; ask it of the bad, and *they* will tell you that it is virtue. Virtue, virtue it is, which constitutes the peace of individuals, the safety of states, the order of society, the happiness of mankind. Now if God created us to be happy, if all his dealings and communications with us have a regard to our happiness, and if our happiness is identified with our virtue, it follows that the object of all his dealings and communications with us, is the assistance, the increase, the confirmation of our virtue. Every thing that God has declared to man at sundry times and in divers manners, by the fathers, the prophets, and his Son, concerning his nature, his character, his purposes, his will, our situation, our prospects, and our duty, or upon any other subject whatever, if there be any other subject of revelation not embraced under these heads, every thing which God has made known to us at any time, in any manner, and by any instrument or means, points to our moral condition and improvement as to its great and eternal end. In short, virtue is the object of all revelation; the only object which we can admit, for it is the only object of which we can conceive.

Let it be observed, however, that by virtue, as we use the word, we do not mean those qualities to which that term is often confined by the world; that honesty, decency, and well seeming, which are imposed by the constitution of society, and which are just sufficient to keep a man within the pale of decorum, and out of the reach of human laws. But we mean by the word virtue, what the sacred writers mean by the word holiness or righteousness; we mean the exercise of that love to man, of which love to God is the basis; that performance of duty, of which habitual principle and pious feelings are the source; that steady course of well-doing which begins in a deep and grateful sense of obligation to the Almighty, and never turns aside from any meaner consideration; extending the word to the state of the HEART, as well as the manner of the life. This is the virtue, righteousness, holiness, which we say is the object of revelation; and we desire that this explanation should be kept in mind during the whole train of our remarks.

The manner in which revelation effects this object, becomes the next step in our inquiry. And here the answer appears to be as plain, direct, and natural, as any which has been given. If before any revelation, mankind had discovered by

the light of their reason the whole nature of this virtue, and knew exactly what it was to be virtuous, but still were so limited in foresight and so assailed by temptation, that their conduct was not only often wrong, but that their principles became corrupt and their characters depraved, then the manner of effecting the object of revelation would be, to offer such powerful reasons and inducements to the constant pursuit of a right course, that the evil tendencies of the above mentioned influences would be counteracted, if not entirely and universally, yet generally and in a great degree. But if they were destitute, both of an accurate knowledge of right and wrong, and of motives to induce them to adopt the one and avoid the other, then the manner of effecting the object of revelation would certainly be, to furnish them with both, to enlighten their ignorance and to assist their weakness. In such a condition as this last, the world had long remained before the revelation of Christianity, and to such a condition was that revelation adapted. We speak of the revelation of Christianity alone, both because it contains all that was of universal importance in the Jewish dispensation, and because it is the only one which has been made to all mankind. Before it was made to them, they were exceedingly corrupt; they were deeply sunk in ignorance and sin. What was to be the remedy? Why, no other certainly than the proposition of a plain and perfect system of duty, which if pursued would make them virtuous and happy, accompanied by certain assistances, motives, and sanctions, sufficiently powerful to lead them to pursue it. Now if we open the New Testament, which is the only source from which we can derive our knowledge of the revelation of God through Jesus Christ, what do we find contained and revealed there? If we leave out the history, the great body of the remainder consists of moral precepts, which inculcate the most uniform and unbending virtue. To these are added certain doctrines, which are always connected with the precepts in their design, and which serve them either separately as assistances, motives, and sanctions, or in all these capacities together. It will be allowed by all, that if the moral precepts of the gospel be obeyed, such an obedience will make us virtuous and happy, that is to say, accomplish the design of the Almighty in creating us; and to our view nothing can be more clear, than that the purpose of every single doctrine of the same revelation is to enable us to render that obedience and fulfil that design. Acquaint us with a higher, nobler, and more rational purpose, and we will embrace it with joy; prove to us that another purpose is expressly declared in

the scriptures, and at the instant we will resign this with readiness and with pleasure.

We are aware, that a doctrine is advocated by many, which militates with the temper of these remarks, and opposes us at the entrance of our way. We allude to the doctrine of the utter inability of man, in his natural state, to obey the will of God. It would be incompatible with our present design to enter into a thorough examination of the objections which might be brought against our views; but upon this one we think proper just to make the two following observations. First, that in a limited sense of this doctrine we believe it ourselves; we believe that mankind, before they were assisted by the grace or favour of God with the motives and means of the Christian revelation, were unable to perform their duty or obey his will, from the very circumstance of their being thus unassisted. In this sense, indeed, it constitutes one of our former propositions. Our second observation with regard to the doctrine in its full extent and unexplained signification, is this, that it appears strange and inconsistent, to us it appears contradictory, that man should have the power completely to *counteract* the benevolent design of God in creating him, which was, to make him virtuous and happy, and yet be entirely destitute of the power to *answer* that design.

Let us now proceed to inquire into the tendencies and uses of the principal and undisputed doctrines of that revelation, which was made to all men by Jesus Christ. We will commence with the attributes of the Deity. What is that power with which we are insensibly, though necessarily, intimately, and eternally connected? And what is the purpose for which a knowledge of this power was revealed?

We are told, that the high power above us is single, unparticipated and unimparted; that there is but *one* God. The use of this doctrine is to preserve men from idolatry and its consequent immoralities. Men are prevented from deifying their monarchs, their heroes, their passions, their fancies and their fears, from cringing to ideal existences, whom they make almost as weak and quite as wicked as themselves, and from bowing with abject and ignorant reverence before "stocks and stones." The moral uses of this doctrine will be easily discerned without our entering into a more particular explanation of them.

God is *holy*. We cannot shelter our sins under the plea of example. His holiness is an inducement to purity in ourselves, for "what fellowship hath light with darkness?"

God is *just*. He is influenced by no partial considerations. His favour is to be obtained only by our individual efforts in the practice of virtue. No incense from the shrine of superstition, no bribe from guilty fear, will alter his least purpose, or purchase a single smile. This attribute gives assurance also to upright intentions and honest endeavours. It will not suffer us to faint at the thought, that though we exert ourselves to the best of our ability, we still fall far short of our duty; for it is a characteristic of justice to make allowances for difference of advantages, opportunities and situation, for necessary ignorance, temptation and frailty.

God is *good*. Every cause and every principle of gratitude calls upon us to render to him the only return which we can make and which he requires, our best obedience—our own happiness.

God is *merciful*. Into the character of the Deity there enters not the least portion of revenge. Sincere contrition never need despair, sincere repentance never need to be repented of; entire reformation of heart and life ensures the forgiveness and favour of God, and leaves past sin, not to his persecuting vengeance, but to the remorse and other bitter consequences, which by the constitution of nature are bound to pursue and to punish it. Much has been said concerning the accommodation of the justice with the mercy of God. To us, they seem perfectly to coincide. Others may believe, that there are two warring principles, two attributes which are at variance with each other in the perfect character of God. We cannot. The ideas of others concerning divine justice, may be, that it writes its laws in characters of blood; that it pays no regard to any circumstances, and that it requires absolute perfection of beings, who were created frail; they are not ours.

God is *omnipresent and omniscient*. He is in all our paths, and we cannot escape from him; he is in the recesses of our hearts, and we cannot deceive him. To know that the eye of God is at all times full upon us, and that he is perfectly acquainted with our inmost thoughts, is certainly a motive to restrain us from doing or conceiving wrong. It creates a happy confidence and trust likewise, to be assured that there is a Being who is every where present to protect and defend us, and that He, who knows all things, will never err in his conduct toward man, or in his government of the universe.

God is *Almighty*. He is therefore perfectly able to punish and to reward. Every other being is entirely subordinate to his control, and we need not therefore fear the malicious or the

ignorant exertion of any other power. We are wholly at his disposal; it is vain therefore to think of resisting him, and it is consoling to think, that we are in the hands of one, who will make all things work together for good to them that love him.

God is *unchangeable*. We can rely with confidence upon the fulfilment of all his promises, and the certain accomplishment of his whole word. The order of his government will remain unmoved. The rewards of virtue will retain their office, and not be made the wages of sin; the consequences of sin will follow their accustomed course, and not pursue the footsteps of virtue.

God is *eternal*. This attribute secures the confidence of virtue. He never began to be; there is no influence, therefore, far back among the ages, to disturb the present happy disposition of things. He will never cease to be; the same power, therefore, the same holiness, justice, goodness, mercy, wisdom, and immutability, will guide and govern all things, world without end.

These remarks upon the attributes of the Deity, although they are brief, will be sufficient to show, that the divine nature and character were not revealed to exercise our ingenuity, or to satisfy our curiosity, but to assist our virtue, to exalt our characters, to guide and lift us to moral perfection. The means by which they effect this end are various, according to the different motives which they present. They may be all comprised in one word, and that is **PIETY**. The feelings, affections, sentiments, which spring from contemplation on these attributes, do more than any thing else to elevate the human soul, and fix it in that exalted and unswerving love of purity, which will most effectually guard it against all evil bias. They excite immediately to obedience, and they furnish abundant consolations. And even the consolations they impart, assist us in the road to excellence, by banishing that spirit of repining and discontent, which weakens the power of exertion, casts a gloom over the character, unsettles the temper, and, in a greater or less degree, unfits us for the duties which we owe to God, to our neighbour and ourselves.

Having thus examined the uses for which God has revealed to us his own nature and character, and having shown as we think, that they could be no other than motives and means to assist us in our duty, we shall pursue the same method with regard to the other doctrines of revelation. As the very subject which is under discussion, presupposes a Providence, a belief in this doctrine being no other in fact than a belief in the natural and moral government of God, we shall make no

other remark upon its uses, than that they are necessarily united and incorporated with those, which proceed from every part of that connexion between the Creator and his creatures, into the supposition of which the doctrine of a Providence must always be admitted.

There are doctrines which are only modifications or exertions of the divine attributes, such as the veracity, and the grace, or favour of God, and to which the same remarks may be applied which were made concerning *them*.

There are some others, which point so plainly and exclusively to our moral condition, that to describe their uses would only be to repeat all that has been said. We mean by this, that repentance, conversion, justification, sanctification, redemption, are the moral ends, which are to be effected by the motives and means furnished by those subjects of belief, which are more strictly denominated doctrines.

Without, therefore, entering into a more minute explanation of the topics embraced by either of the above mentioned heads, but leaving them to be explained by the general principles, which we have laid down, we come to that doctrine of revelation which affords to virtue a stronger motive than any other, and is better than any other adapted to engage mankind in the service of God, and lead them to their intended perfection. Can there be any doubt of the doctrine which we mean? Will any one, who has not discarded all motives of a religious nature, hesitate for a moment to point out that one by which he is principally actuated? Where is the man, who knows that he has but a few years to live in this world, who does not hope that he is to live again in a world, where he will not suffer so much, and which will not pass away so soon? What is the most powerful inducement to virtue? Is it not the belief, that it will be rewarded hereafter? And what is the most powerful restraint upon sin? Is it not the belief, that it will be punished hereafter? What is our best consolation in the loss of friends? Is it not that they have gone to be happy, and that we shall see them again? What is our best comfort in every misery, except in that which vice produces? Is it not that we shall soon be received to a state in which there will be no more of it? And in that solemn hour, into which the hopes and the fears, the thoughts and the actions of life are crowded together; when we hear the voice of an awful authority calling upon us to make haste, for it was time that we were gone; when we feel that we must leave all that we ever knew of enjoyment, all that we have ever proved of existence; when we see the veil descending, which is to drop between us and the world for-

ever, what is our support, what is our hope, what is our *doctrine* then? Are we employed in investigating the mode in which the Deity exists? In making nice distinctions between being and person; essence and substance, creation, generation, and procession? In inquiring whether our sins are the sins of natural and necessary imperfection, or of long derived inheritance; whether our destiny is fixed by well meant endeavours, or unaccountable impulses; whether this rite be an influence, or a symbol, and that rite a token of respect and remembrance, or a terrible mystery? whether this doctrine be not a sound one, and that other, a heresy? are these the questions which occupy the thoughts of a dying man? His mind must be strangely perverted if they are. No—the great support of dissolving nature is the trust that it will again be restored to us, and with higher exercises and powers than ever; the blessed hope to which we turn from all dispute and noise, is the hope of immortality; the great question which lingers on the tongue till it can articulate no longer, and then stays upon the mind till reason leaves it, is this: “If a man die shall he live again?”

True, there are other thoughts of vast moment which come to us upon our death-beds; thoughts of our past lives, and of our acceptance with God. But nothing can be more evident than that these are all grounded upon the supposition that there is another life, our condition in which will be affected or determined by our conduct in this; that there is a future state, in which we shall be received or rejected by God. If we do not already believe that we shall exist again hereafter, it is quite unnecessary and unreasonable to trouble ourselves in our last moments, with what we have done here; all the consequences of our actions are exhausted then; we have lived, enjoyed, and suffered; it matters not how well or ill we have lived, or how much or how little we have suffered and enjoyed; we are never to live, enjoy, or suffer more; we are to be as though we had never been; there may or may not be a power above us, but with that we can have no concern; for we are soon to be far beyond the reach of any influence or feeling; we are to die; to become like the clods of the valley; and we have nothing to do, but to die with what stoicism we can gather. All our hopes, fears and thoughts then, concerning our future state, rest, as we said, upon the previous belief, that there is a future state. If we are told, that no Christian ever thinks of *doubting* that there is another life, we answer that we are glad, and that no Christian ever *should* think of doubting it; but we ask in our turn, *why* he never thinks of doubting it? Because it is so plainly revealed in the Christian scriptures;

because the whole Christian dispensation is founded upon it; and because Christ himself died to confirm it; because, in short, he is a Christian. The heathen thought of doubting it; in fact, they never thought of it with certainty; and it is a full belief in this doctrine, as taught and proved by Jesus Christ, which, together with its proper effects, makes a man a Christian. If therefore the doctrine of immortality be our highest motive, consolation and hope, it takes the greatest share in enabling us to fulfil the design of God in our creation, by making ourselves virtuous and happy; that is to say, it is the most important doctrine of revelation. With this doctrine is connected that of equal rewards and punishments; our future state will be a state of exact retribution. Every good deed will produce its happy, and every bad deed, its evil influence upon our condition hereafter.

To believe that this principal doctrine, together with the others which have been mentioned, were revealed by one who proved by miracles, that he was commissioned to reveal them, and so to believe in them, that they shall have an operative influence upon the conduct, forms the Christian doctrine of *faith*. By this faith we are saved, because it makes us virtuous and happy. This explains the doctrine and the uses of faith, and closes our remarks upon the doctrines of revelation.

There are some other circumstances connected with revelation, which cannot be properly termed doctrines, such as prayer, and the two rites of baptism and the Lord's supper. But, as it is our great object to establish the position that every thing which regards revelation, that every particular of of the dealings of God with man, performs the sole and the noble office of assisting us in attaining moral perfection, and consequently happiness, we shall make a few remarks upon the above named particulars. We conceive then, that it is for their moral influence on character, that they are valuable, and were designed. We do not *pray* to Almighty God, because we expect to receive all the objects of our prayer. We know that we often ignorantly ask that which would prove an evil and a harm to us instead of a blessing; that we often ask what the Deity does not see fit to bestow. But the use of prayer is, to excite and to cherish those devout, humble, contrite, and grateful feelings, which will make us worthy in a degree of receiving those good gifts which come down from above; that is to say, which will make us virtuous.

Of *baptism* we may say, that it has a tendency to produce virtue, by showing us that we ought to be virtuous. By external, it inculcates internal purification. It signifies, to use

the words of St. Peter, "the answer of a good conscience toward God;" the firm belief of the person baptized, that purity of heart and life is required from all the disciples of Christ. Upon adults this influence of the rite is immediate. Upon children it is produced mediately through the parents, who are laid under an obligation to do as much as they can in training them up in the way they should go.

By eating bread and drinking wine in the rite of the *Lord's supper*, it was designed that we should cherish a respectful and grateful remembrance of him, of all that he did and suffered for our good, and that we should be led by the dispositions thus excited to live as becomes his disciples.

Thus have we shown, that revelation, in all its parts and connexions, was expressly designed and given for the assistance of virtue—to make us holy as God is holy, and perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect; to furnish motives and means to the performance of duty, the obedience of God, the attainment of happiness; and we are now prepared to answer the question, *What is Religion?* Religion signifies the relations which subsist between God and man, and all the duties which result from that relation. Or we may say, religion comprehends the object of revelation, and the manner of effecting that object; and as the object of all revelation has been proved to be the advancement and security of virtue, and as the manner in which the Deity effects this object is, by giving us certain laws, which, if obeyed, will make us virtuous and happy, and certain motives and sanctions to assist us in obeying them—religion, in a more strictly practical sense, signifies that high, and steady, and thorough virtue, that moral purity and excellence, which is produced by a constant and habitual reference to these motives and sanctions. Religion says to us, "Do this and this, and you will be happy here and hereafter; if you will *not* do so, you will be neither." And, finally, a religious man is one who loves his neighbour as himself, and keeps himself unspotted from the world, because they are duties which he owes to his Maker, and because they are prompted by a regard to the interests of eternity; one who obeys God, because he is a God of mercy and love, and because God has, by the constitution of nature, annexed to his obedience the truest happiness in this world, and promised to it, in the gospel of his Son Jesus Christ, everlasting happiness in the world to come.

The subject which we have now finished, suggests a few remarks. We are led in the first place, to adore the goodness of God who has so graciously manifested himself in all his

relations with his dependent creatures. By placing religion in the light in which we have now made it appear, we gain a most grateful and inspiring view of the character of the Deity, who, in all his dealings with man, pursues, and pursues alone, man's welfare and felicity. He has made our duty to be our interest, his service our delight, our virtue our gain, our improvement our glory. He has made the impulse of the heart the exercise of reason, the dearest office of the affections the noblest employment of the understanding, the desires of nature the decrees of heaven, the hope of man the promise of God. He has made the yoke of Christ the easiest which we can bear, the burthen of religion the lightest which we can carry. He has perfectly adapted his demands to our condition and our wants. He has intimately connected our expectations with our exertions, our assistances with our efforts, our supports with our labours, our consolations with our sufferings. This gracious course will experience no alteration; these benevolent designs will suffer no change. He has joined time and eternity together, he has made our condition in the next world to depend upon our conduct in this, our characters here to fix our destination there, the course which we run in this narrow world to give its impulse to the race of ages. While we contemplate such goodness, our hearts are full; we feel as if we would never be unworthy of it again, as if the perversity which could wilfully lift itself up against it, if it were not madness, was a vile outrage upon humanity.

We would remark, secondly, that the object of revelation supplies us with a test in judging of those doctrines which are said to be parts of it. That object, as we have seen, is our virtue and happiness. All the true doctrines of revelation have a moral tendency. If then a doctrine be offered as true, which cannot be perceived to possess any such tendency, it may fairly be suspected, and if it have an apparent and decided *immoral* tendency, it must be rejected; it is no part of revelation; it did not come from God; scripture cannot contradict itself, and the whole tenor of scripture will be against it. Such a rejection will be demanded, by a regard for the holy volume which contains our faith, by every sentiment of right and wrong, by every good feeling which dwells in our bosoms, and by our gratitude to our Almighty Father who created us to be happy, and to find happiness only in a moral resemblance of himself.

The principles which we have laid down should calm the anxieties of those, whose minds are troubled and distressed concerning the particular creed which they should choose

among the various systems which claim for themselves the truth. If, having made patient and conscientious inquiry, we do not after all obtain the truth, or so much of it as others do, it is certainly our loss and our misfortune, but it cannot be our fault or our condemnation. Only this we may be sure of, that the better our faith is adapted to increase our virtue, the nearer does it approximate to perfect truth, for the better does it answer the design of God.

DAILY PRAYER.

THE scriptures of the old and new Testaments agree in enjoining prayer. Let no man call himself a Christian, who lives without giving a part of life to this duty. We are not taught how often we must pray; but our Lord in teaching us to say, "Give us *this day* our daily bread," implies that we should pray daily. He has even said to us, "pray always;" an injunction to be explained indeed with that latitude which many of his precepts require, but which is not to be satisfied, we think, without regular and habitual devotion. As to the particular hours to be given to this duty, every Christian may choose them for himself. Our religion is too liberal and spiritual to bind us to any place or any hour of prayer. But there are parts of the day particularly favourable to this duty, and which if possible should be redeemed for it. On these we shall offer a few reflections.

The *first* of these periods is the *morning*, which even nature seems to have pointed out to men of different religions, as a fit time for offerings to the Divinity. In the morning our minds are not so much shaken by worldly cares and pleasures, as in other parts of the day. Retirement and sleep have helped to allay the violence of our feelings, to calm the feverish excitement so often produced by intercourse with men. The hour is a still one. The hurry and tumults of life are not begun, and we naturally share in the tranquillity around us. Having for so many hours lost our hold on the world, we can banish it more easily from the mind, and worship with less divided attention. This then is a favourable time for approaching the invisible Author of our being, for strengthening the intimacy of our minds with him, for thinking upon a future life, and for seeking those spiritual aids which we need in the labours and temptations of every day.

In the morning there is much to feed the spirit of devotion. It offers an abundance of thoughts, friendly to pious feeling. When we look on creation, what a happy and touching change do we witness. A few hours past, the earth was wrapt in gloom and silence. There seemed "a pause in nature." But now, a new flood of light has broken forth, and creation rises before us in fresher and brighter hues, and seems to rejoice as if it had just received birth from its Author. The sun never sheds more cheerful beams, and never proclaims more loudly God's glory and goodness, than when he returns after the coldness and dampness of night, and awakens man and inferior animals to the various purposes of their being. A spirit of joy seems breathed over the earth and through the sky. It requires little effort of imagination to read delight in the kindled clouds, or in the fields bright with dew. This is the time, when we can best feel and bless the Power which said, "let there be light;" which "set a tabernacle for the sun in the heavens," and made him the dispenser of fruitfulness and enjoyment through all regions.

If we next look at ourselves, what materials does the morning furnish for devout thought. At the close of the past day, we were exhausted by our labours, and unable to move without wearisome effort. Our minds were sluggish, and could not be held to the most interesting objects. From this state of exhaustion, we sunk gradually into entire insensibility. Our limbs became motionless; our senses were shut as in death. Our thoughts were suspended, or only wandered confusedly and without aim. Our friends, and the universe, and God himself were forgotten. And what a change does the morning bring with it! On waking we find, that sleep, the image of death, has silently infused into us a new life. The weary limbs are braced again. The dim eye has become bright and piercing. The mind is returned from the region of forgetfulness to its old possessions. Friends are met again with a new interest. We are again capable of devout sentiment, virtuous effort, and Christian hope. With what subjects of gratitude then does the morning furnish us? We can hardly recal the state of insensibility from which we have just emerged, without a consciousness of our dependence, or think of the renovation of our powers and intellectual being, without feeling our obligation to God. There is something very touching in the consideration, if we will fix our minds upon it; that God thought of us when we could not think; that he watched over us when he had no power to avert peril from ourselves; that he continued our vital motions, and in due time broke the chains of

sleep, and set our imprisoned faculties free. How fit is it at this hour to raise to God the eyes which he has opened, and the arm which he has strengthened; to acknowledge his providence; and to consecrate to him the powers he has renewed? How fit that he should be the first object of the thoughts and affections which he has restored! How fit to employ in his praise the tongue he has loosed, and the breath which he has spared!

But the morning is a fit time for devotion, not only from its relation to the past night, but considered as the introduction of a new day. To a thinking mind, how natural at this hour are such reflections as the following:—I am now to enter on a new period of my life, to start afresh in my course. I am to return to that world, where I have often gone astray; to receive impressions which may never be effaced; to perform actions which will never be forgotten; to strengthen a character, which will fit me for heaven or hell. I am this day to meet temptations which have often subdued me; I am to be entrusted again with opportunities of usefulness, which I have often neglected. I am to influence the minds of others, to help in moulding their characters, and in deciding the happiness of their present and future life. How uncertain is this day! What unseen dangers are before me! What unexpected changes may await me! It may be my last day! It will certainly bring me nearer to death and judgment!—Now, when entering on a period of life so important, yet so uncertain, how fit and natural is it, before we take the first step, to seek the favour of that Being on whom the lot of every day depends, to commit all our interests to his almighty and wise providence, to seek his blessing on our labours, and his succour in temptation, and to consecrate to his service the day which he raises upon us. This morning devotion, not only agrees with the sentiments of the heart, but tends to make the day happy, useful, and virtuous. Having cast ourselves on the mercy and protection of the Almighty, we shall go forth with new confidence to the labours and duties which he imposes. Our early prayer will help to shed an odour of piety through the whole life. God, having first occupied, will more easily recur to our mind. Our first step will be in the right path, and we may hope a happy issue.

So fit and useful is morning devotion, it ought not to be omitted without necessity. If our circumstances will allow the privilege, it is a bad sign, when no part of the morning is spent in prayer. If God find no place in our minds at that early and peaceful hour, he will hardly recur to us in the tumults of

life. If the benefits of the morning do not soften us, we can hardly expect the heart to melt with gratitude through the day. If the world then rush in, and take possession of us, when we are at some distance and have had a respite from its cares, how can we hope to shake it off, when we shall be in the midst of it, pressed and agitated by it on every side. Let a part of the morning, if possible, be set apart to devotion; and to this end we should fix the hour of rising, so that we may have an early hour at our own disposal. Our piety is suspicious, if we can renounce, as too many do, the pleasures and benefits of early prayer, rather than forego the senseless indulgence of unnecessary sleep. What! we can rise early enough for business. We can even anticipate the dawn, if a favourite pleasure or an uncommon gain requires the effort. But we cannot rise, that we may bless our great Benefactor, that we may arm ourselves for the severe conflicts to which our principles are to be exposed. We are willing to rush into the world, without thanks offered, or a blessing sought. From a day thus begun, what ought we to expect but thoughtlessness and guilt.

Let us now consider *another* part of the day which is favourable to the duty of prayer; we mean the *evening*. This season, like the morning, is calm and quiet. Our labours are ended. The bustle of life has gone by. The distracting glare of the day has vanished. The darkness which surrounds us favours seriousness, composure, and solemnity. At night the earth fades from our sight, and nothing of creation is left us but the starry heavens, so vast, so magnificent, so serene, as if to guide up our thoughts above all earthly things to God and immortality.

This period should in part be given to prayer, as it furnishes a variety of devotional topics and excitements. The evening is the close of an important division of time, and is therefore a fit and natural season for stopping and looking back on the day. And can we ever look back on a day, which bears no witness to God, and lays no claim to our gratitude? Who is it that strengthens us for daily labour, gives us daily bread, continues our friends and common pleasures, and grants us the privilege of retiring after the cares of the day to a quiet and beloved home? The review of the day will often suggest not only these ordinary benefits, but peculiar proofs of God's goodness, unlooked for successes, singular concurrences of favourable events, signal blessings sent to our friends, or new and powerful aids to our own virtue, which call for peculiar thankfulness. And shall all these benefits pass away unnoticed? Shall we retire to repose as insensible as the wearied brute?

How fit and natural is it, to close with pious acknowledgment, the day which has been filled with divine beneficence !

But the evening is the time to review, not only our blessings, but our actions. A reflecting mind will naturally remember at this hour that another day is gone, and gone to testify of us to our judge. How natural and useful to inquire, what report it has carried to heaven. Perhaps we have the satisfaction of looking back on a day, which in its general tenor has been innocent and pure, which, having begun with God's praise, has been spent as in his presence ; which has proved the reality of our principles in temptation ; and shall such a day end without gratefully acknowledging Him in whose strength we have been strong, and to whom we owe the powers and opportunities of Christian improvement ? But no day will present to us recollections of purity unmixed with sin. Conscience, if suffered to inspect faithfully and speak plainly, will recount irregular desires, and defective motives, talents wasted and time mispent ; and shall we let the day pass from us without penitently confessing our offences to Him who has witnessed them, and who has promised pardon to true repentance ? Shall we retire to rest with a burden of unlamented and unforgiven guilt upon our consciences ? Shall we leave these stains to spread over and sink into the soul ? A religious recollection of our lives is one of the chief instruments of piety. If possible, no day should end without it. If we take no account of our sins on the day on which they are committed, can we hope that they will recur to us at a more distant period, that we shall watch against them to-morrow, or that we shall gain the strength to resist them, which we will not implore ?

One observation more, and we have done. The evening is a fit time for prayer, not only as it ends the day, but as it immediately precedes the period of repose. The hour of activity having passed, we are soon to sink into insensibility and sleep. How fit that we resign ourselves to the care of that Being who never sleeps, to whom the darkness is as the light, and whose providence is our only safety ! How fit to intreat him that he would keep us to another day ; or, if our bed should prove our grave, that he would give us a part in the resurrection of the just, and awake to a purer and immortal life. The most important periods of prayer have now been pointed out. Let our prayers, like the ancient sacrifices, ascend morning and evening. Let our days begin and end with God.

H. H. H.

ON THE CHARACTER OF THOMAS EMLYN, WITH EXTRACTS.

THERE are probably few of our readers who are ignorant of the name of Emlyn, or who do not know something of his history. But many of these, perhaps, have merely heard of his sufferings for conscience sake, without having become acquainted with the excellence of his character, and great practical piety of his life. For the sake of such, we are induced to make the following extracts. They are from the remarks and reflections he made at the time of his imprisonment, and whilst he was suffering the severest reproaches and calumnies for having published his "*Humble Inquiry into the Scripture Account of Jesus Christ.*" They prove that the spirit of the gospel was quite as near his heart, as the desire of ascertaining its true doctrines. It would be difficult, we think, to name any martyr, in any age of the church, who has borne persecution with more courageous firmness or more admirable meekness. Others, it is true, may have undergone more severe persecutions, and endured more intense bodily torture. But the sufferings of Emlyn, though not so great, were as well calculated to prove how deeply the Christian principles had penetrated his character, how thoroughly they influenced and controlled his human feelings, and had enabled him, like his Lord, to suffer without threatening, and be reviled without reviling again. And he went through his trial faithfully. His example, which is edifying to all, should be cherished with particular admiration and love by those, who with him have departed from the form of established words in human creeds and systems, and have thought it better to take their definition of Divine Unity from the scriptures alone.

We are sensible, indeed, that patience in martyrdom, is no infallible proof that the doctrine for which one suffers is true; if it were, then the doctrines of the papists and of the reformers would be equally true, for each have had their martyrs. It only proves that the sufferer *believes* them to be true. But, notwithstanding, the spirit in which he endures may teach the most useful lessons; and the example of Emlyn deserves to be cherished, because it proves that a blameless life, a forgiving temper, ardent devotional sentiment, and unqualified submission to the Divine will, do not depend for their existence upon those doctrines which are disputed among men, but upon the principles which are common to all; it proves that he who departs from the standard of orthodoxy, does not therefore depart, as some would have us believe, from those principles

which fortify, support and console—from that truth which sanctifies; it proves to us, that a belief in the strict unity of God, implying that Jesus Christ whom he sent to save us is not God, is no less consistent with a spiritual state of mind, fervent devotion, and practical excellence, than the more incomprehensible doctrine, which has so often been asserted to be alone capable of producing them.

There is a well-known sermon of his, entitled *Funeral Consolations*, which sets in a beautiful light his religious sensibility. Many of our readers have doubtless seen it, and derived comfort from it in their afflictions. Let them look at it again, and remember, if they thought not of it before, that it was written by a man, who, shortly after giving this evidence of piety, and great attachment to the religion of the gospel, was persecuted as a blasphemer, and shunned as an enemy of the faith.

It is only necessary to add,* his crime was the believing that our Saviour Jesus Christ, was not the Almighty God. For publishing his sentiments on this subject, he was accused of blasphemy; was tried by a court of justice, under circumstances of peculiar hardship and aggravated insult; was not allowed to speak in his own defence; and his counsel were so brow beaten, that they dared not speak for him. His sentence was “a year’s imprisonment, pay a fine of one thousand pounds, lie in prison till the fine should be paid, and find security for good behaviour during life.” He laid in prison more than two years, because he was utterly unable to pay the fine; and meanwhile the horrors of imprisonment were aggravated by the neglect and unkindness of his brethren in the ministry, and his former friends. “Only one,” says he, “vouchsafed me so much as the small office of humanity in visiting me when in prison; nor had they so much pity for the soul of their erring brother (as they thought me) as to seek to turn him from the error of his ways.” It is difficult to restrain our feelings of indignation at the cold hearted bigotry and narrow-minded cruelty, which are exhibited throughout this whole transaction. How great, therefore, our admiration at the humility, meekness, and forbearance, which shone in all the deportment of the persecuted man!

It is time to come to the extracts. The first passage forms the conclusion of his “*Narrative.*”

“And thus after *two years*, and above a month’s imprisonment, viz. from the 14th of *June* 1703, to the 21st of *July*

* See Emlyn’s Works, vol. 1. Also Christian Disciple, for April 1817.

1705, and upon giving security, by two bondsmen, for good behaviour during life, I obtained a release from my bonds. But still there remains another, and more righteous judgment, where all both high and low shall stand and await the sentence of the great *judge* and *bishop* of souls, who will surely reverse all erroneous judgments here; for *he will render tribulation to them who have troubled others; but to them who are troubled, rest and peace*: and they who have conscientiously erred, will surely fare better, than those who have persecuted them for such error. For *they shall have judgment without mercy, who shew no mercy*. But I heartily and daily pray, this may never be the portion of any who have injured me: and as I hope the good God will forgive me if I have erred, since he knows 'tis with sincerity, and that I suffer for what I take to be his truth and glory; so I also hope he will pardon them, who have persecuted me, only from a mistaken zeal; for *they did it ignorantly in unbelief*.

"And now after all, I thank my most merciful God and Father, that as he called me not to this lot of suffering, till I was arrived at some maturity of judgment, and firmness of resolution, so he left me not when my friends and acquaintance forsook me; that he supported my spirit, to endure this *trial of my faith* without wavering; that I was never so cast down, as to be tempted to renounce the truth; that he preserved my health under this long confinement; that I had a few friends who were a comfort to me in my bonds; (the *Lord grant they may find mercy of the Lord in that day*) that he inclined any in authority to shew, at last, compassion to me: and that he has brought me out of prison, and *set my feet in a large place*; that I have yet food and raiment left me; and above all, that he has given me a mind, I think, as well contented with it, as ever I was in my greatest prosperity. I am content to want the kind and vain respects of the world, and to give up my name to mistaken reproach; or to lose it (if that may be) in silent unregarded *obscurity*. I have suffered the loss of *many things*, and do not repent; but upon the review, I do still count it all but loss and dung, if it has any way advanced the excellency of the knowledge of *Christ Jesus my Lord*.

It is a further ground of rejoicing, to see the light of important truth breaking forth in many other parts, and spreading abroad its beautiful ray; that God has raised up divers others, bold enough to profess it, and able enough, with his assistance, to defend it; I mean with weapons of a spiritual warfare, against those whose great confidence and dexterity are in those which are carnal. And though it has been my great

gravamen or misery to be laid by in silence ; so that I have been sometimes ready to lament myself as an *unprofitable servant*, turned out of his master's service : yet if I have contributed any thing to retrieve the injured honour of the *peerless* majesty of the *one God and Father* of our *Lord Jesus*, whom to be like to, was the great glory of our *Lord Jesus* ; and if the things which have happened to me, have fallen out *rather to the furtherance of the Gospel*, I shall not think myself to have been wholly useless. For though I shall ever prefer the interests of serious piety, charity, and practical holiness, to any barren speculations ; and had much rather a man should love our *Lord Jesus* in sincerity, than barely think of him just as I do : yet if I have also served the cause of his truth, it may be 'tis beyond what I could have done, by teaching men only what they would have taught them ; because there will never be men wanting to take that office, while fewer will take the part I have borne, to the hazard of all that the world counts dear and pleasant. However, as matters were, I had no room for an innocent choice, nor any other part but this left me ; being judged unworthy, and made incapable, of all the rest. Yet, during my confinement in the *Marshalsea*, as I suffered on account of religion, so I continued to preach there :* I had hired a pretty large room to myself : whither on the *Lord's-days* resorted some of the *imprisoned Debtors* ; and from without doors came several of the lower sort of my former people and usual hearers, who would not wholly forsake me, nor refuse to worship God with me ; which was a great pleasure in my condition. And if in the whole I may but approve myself to my great *Judge*, and giver of the prize ; I am not anxious about the applause or censures of the spectators, who shall be judged also."

The following are from "*Meditations on my Afflicted Condition*, 1704."

"1. O my God, what a change hast thou made in my outward condition ! Once the light of thy providence shone pleasantly on my tabernacle ; I had abundance of prosperity and fulness. I had a dear and pleasant companion in whom I securely trusted, but thou hast removed the desires of mine eyes with an early stroke. I had a tolerable esteem, and a multitude of friends, but am now become their scorn and by-

* See his farewell Sermon upon his release from prison, Sermon 6, in the volume of *Sermons*.

word, and my acquaintance and friends stand afar off. I had a delightful habitation, which is now exchanged for a prison; nay, I had once great opportunity to serve thy honour, and to do good to men by instructing them in thy will, and by persuading them to do it; but am now laid by from all that desirable service in thy beautiful courts. O Lord of hosts, my God and my King, my soul still thirsts and longs to behold thee in thy temple. Oh, how uncertain is this world's good! I see now by experience, that all flesh is but grass, and all the glory of man but as the flower of the field, which for a while spreads its beautiful leaves, and sends out its fragrant odours, and is with pleasure admired by every eye, but in a day or two it fades and dies, and there remains nothing but a poor neglected despised stalk. Such has my worldly glory been. O vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

"2. My God, I intend not in all this complaint to arraign the equity of thy wise providence, as though thou hadst done any wrong to thy poor sinful creature. Though what I have suffered from merciless men be not (as thou knowest right well) for any unrighteousness in my hand, but only for thy name and truth's sake, as my soul is verily persuaded, and according to the best judgment I can make from thy holy scriptures; yet O Lord, when I remember thy hand is in all this, I fall upon my face in confusion, whilst I see my own unworthiness, which thou mayst justly punish. With men I will justify myself, I will hold fast my righteousness, and not let go my integrity till I die, but with thee, O God, I will not contend; thou art righteous and I am sinful, for though thy grace hath kept me from gross and scandalous crimes, yet am I vile in my own eyes, and cannot but take shame to myself, that in the days of my prosperity, I was not more thankful for thy favours, that I brought forth no more fruit, that I was not more active in thy service. I became too secure and inconsiderate, so that after gentler corrections thou hast now laid thy hand heavy upon me, that I may not *despise* thy chastenings. O Lord grant, that I may not *faint* under them.

"3. And this, O Lord, thou knowest is my greatest burden in all my adversity, that I have done any thing to provoke thy displeasure. I am sometimes apt to think, as if thou hadst turned me out of thy service, as an unprofitable servant, and laid me aside as a broken vessel, in which thou hast no pleasure. Chasten me, O God, if thou wilt, but let it not be in thy wrath; rebuke thy offending creature, if thou pleasest, but let it not be in thy hot displeasure; correct thou mine iniquity with thy rod, if thou seest good, and my transgressions

with stripes, but so that thy loving kindness may not depart from me, nor thy faithfulness fail me. Smite me with the frowns of a friend, and shew me the light of thy countenance, and I will lay me down in peace, though my corn and my wine increase not.

“4. And yet, O Lord, I would not be too censorious of thy ways, nor put the worst interpretation upon thy providential rebukes. I remember, of old thou didst afflict thy servant *Job* for a proof of his piety, rather than a punishment of his sin, and that the afflictions of thy people are often temptations or trials of their faith and patience by which thou expectest they should glorify thee in showing what they can endure for thee, and this especially, when they suffer persecution from *men* for conscience towards *God*. This is my case, and though I will be humbly mindful of my sins, as one corrected for his faults, yet will I encourage myself as one called out to a glorious combat by my great Master, for whose peerless glory I am jealous, and for this cause I will not faint, through his grace. It may be it is the design of my good Master to put honour upon me, and bring glory to himself, by singling me out as a champion before men and angels to maintain his cause in those words of my Saviour, *My Father is greater than I*. My silence perhaps may speak, and my sufferings for thee be more serviceable to thy honour, than any other services I could do. Lord help me so to demean myself by patience, courage, and cheerful submission under all my tribulations, that I may glorify thy name and bear an honourable testimony to thy truth, and then I shall count it all joy to have had such trials. I am thy vessel, and thou mayst put me to what use thou wilt, use me so as may be most for thy own glory, whatever befalls me, who am then most honoured, when I can serve most to thy praise.

“5. I have carefully examined into the occasion of my sufferings from uncharitable men, and am greatly assured, that my persecuted opinion is the truth of thy gospel, and yet if it should not be so, that I suffer for *truth*, yet sure I am, I do for *conscience*, which thou wilt accept; for I find no temptation to draw me, but the pure conviction of my mind. I could have esteem, prosperity and friends, but since I cannot have these without belying my own judgment, and thy gospel, I freely renounce them, and am glad I have any thing to lose for thy sake; I will count them but dung in comparison of the true knowledge of thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord, and I bid welcome to my afflictions, to my losses, to my reproaches, to my bonds, and all my persecutions for thy sake. I am contented

with my blessed Lord to be called a *blasphemer* and an *heretic* by men, whilst I am sound and right in thy esteem. But though I suffer unto bonds, O Lord, let not thy word be bound, but run and be glorified in spite of all the opposition of a malignant and untoward generation, who think they do thee service by inhuman cruelties done to thy servants, and whose mistaken religion lies so much in doing mischief to those, that conscientiously differ from them.

“7. O Lord I am thine, thou mayst do with thine own what thou pleasest; I had much rather be in bonds and straits, under reproaches and necessities for honouring my God, than to be at liberty and ease, to be great and full, and God’s glory and interest to be a loser by it. Thou knowest best what my soul’s condition requires; it may be prosperity or deliverance would slay me, and whilst I crave thy relieving hand for ease, thou mayst know, that further smart and pain is needful for me. O Lord, humble me and prove me, so that it may be for my good in my latter end; I would not be so inordinate in my love to this flesh, as to desire peace and quiet, when my soul’s welfare forbids it; Lord, give me my portion of sorrows here, rather than hereafter. Give me now my evil things, that then I may be comforted, and then I’ll say in very faithfulness thou didst correct me.

“10. And yet I find it so hard to raise my desires above this earth, that I admire thy wisdom in making this state so uneasy, that being crossed here, I might give over vain carnal pursuits, and bend more earnestly towards heaven. If notwithstanding my bondage I am so fond of this *Egypt*, if when through my troubles it might be expected I should be glad to go down into the grave for retirement, I am yet so loth to leave this earthly habitation, and when thou art seeming to call me hence, I still crave more delay; how strong, methinks, would the enchantments of this world be, if I had no disturbance in it. If I heard nothing but *Siren* songs, and rolled on with pleasure in *Halcyon* days; if no dear relations did die, nor friends prove false or unkind, nor enemies base and cruel, nor any afflictions disturb my repose, I fear, I should forget the way home, and loiter grievously in my Christian course; such a calm sea would not further me in my voyage, as a few rough gales. Thou, who knowest the best way to draw me out of this snare, hast taught me by thy rebukes not to rest here; and that my heart may find no temptation to settle below, thou hast taken away the dearest objects of my love, that so my affections may follow after, and by this art be translated from earth to heaven, that when I stand gazing after my ascended

endeared companions, I may, so often at least, look towards heaven; and whilst calamities here draw off my heart from things *below*, thy grace and thy love may draw it kindly to things *above*.

“12. Why should it seem grievous to me, that the world hates me? Am I the more out of the way to heaven for going through much tribulation? Do I not find, that affliction and ill usage has been the portion of the most, and the most eminent, servants of God? When I remember *Joseph* in bonds, *Elias* and *Job*, *Jeremy* and *Daniel* in all their troubles, that the holy *Jesus* was a man of sorrows, and the holy Apostles the off-scouring of the world, when I find how many Saints were afflicted, destitute, and tormented, when I read the inventory of *St. Paul's* sufferings, and of those, of whom the world was not worthy; then I think, who am I, that I should think through my conduct or innocence to escape the world's hatred? Shall I not rejoice to be the companion of such excellent persons? I remember, God supported them in all their trials, that they were not forsaken, though persecuted, and that they had at last a glorious deliverance. Well then, I will hope in the God of my salvation, and though cruel men devour me, though they tear my name and my substance, though they tear my family, and tear my body, yet thy grace is sufficient, and thy rewards liberal; I will acquiesce in thy providence, which permits it, and wait for the gracious issue. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”

A DIALOGUE ON SALVATION.

AZARIAH AND BARNABAS.

Azariah. I have recently been meditating much on the subject of salvation. It has been, you know, my opinion heretofore, that none are saved but those who embrace the opinions usually denominated orthodox; but of late I have doubted the correctness of my former opinion. I find that many who dissent from these doctrines have at least the appearance of genuine piety and Christian benevolence. I also find, that many who assume the name of Calvinists, discard a number of the doctrines which were formerly deemed essential. They indeed profess an adherence to the Westminster Catechism, but it is in “general,” and not without a number of exceptions, and various modifications.

Barnabas. I have been aware of your former sentiments, and have often been grieved to find your good opinion of others confined to such narrow limits. But the modes of education and the manner of preaching have heretofore been adapted to prepossess the minds of Christians of different sects one against another, and to prevent a mutual discovery of those evidences of goodness, which otherwise might have been perceived, and have been sources of mutual comfort. A more enlightened and liberal spirit has been for many years gradually gaining ground among the several denominations of Christians ; but there is perhaps still much room for amendment. The more men indulge and encourage a spirit of impartial inquiry, the more they will be convinced of their fallibility ; and this conviction will be likely to extend the circle of hope and charity.

A. From your remarks I should infer, that, in your opinion, there may be good people in each of the denominations of Christians.

B. I hope it is so, and this hope is to me a source of happiness. There are indeed many denominations of Christians, with whom I have had no opportunity to become intimately acquainted : I am, therefore, not in a situation to form a correct opinion respecting them. I have however been so often agreeably disappointed, on forming an acquaintance with persons who dissent from me in opinion, that I dare not censure the people of any sect by wholesale. I think I have found some of the best of men among those sects, which have been the most reproached.

A. Slandorous reports, or reproachful accusations from one sect against another, are not much to be relied on. But may we not safely form an estimate of moral character from avowed opinions—especially opinions which relate to the great and essential doctrines of Christianity ?

B. If I should answer in the affirmative, another important question would immediately occur. What are the great and essential doctrines of Christianity ? To this question very different answers would be given by persons of different sects ; and you are aware, that the sect to which you belong would now give in some respects a very different answer, from what would have been given by their predecessors, who lived a hundred years ago.

A. It is even so ; still there must be some essential doctrines.

B. Another question now occurs. In what sense do you use the term *essential* ? Every gospel truth is essential to the

perfection of the Christian system, and important in its connexion. It may also be a truth which no one, with a good heart, would reject, knowing it to be what it really is. But to doubt the truth even of a gospel doctrine, while a person has not evidence that it is contained in the scriptures, and while he apprehends that the doctrine is dishonorable to God and injurious to man, is no certain evidence of a depraved heart. In this way, I suspect, many important truths have been rejected by good men, from the want of correct information, and through the influence of prejudices of education.

A. By essential doctrines, I mean those, a belief in which is essential to salvation.

B. Do you mean essential for every person, and in every supposable case?

A. I do.

B. Will you name some of those doctrines for examples?

A. I will. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

B. These I regard as sacred and important truths. We will now proceed on the supposition, that a belief in these three doctrines is essential to salvation, in all cases, and to every child of Adam. What are the consequences? Must we not, in the first place, suppose, that the souls of all who lived before the flood have gone to perdition? What knowledge had any one of them of these truths? In the second place, this principle must exclude from heaven every individual that dies in infancy. In the third place, it dooms to destruction the whole of the heathen world in every age. In the fourth place, it will be very doubtful whether Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, or any one of their posterity, who died prior to the birth of the Messiah, has gone to heaven. From the spirit of prophecy they had an expectation of a Messiah; but we have, I think, no evidence that any of them had a correct understanding and belief of the three propositions which you have stated. It is very certain, that the apostles of Jesus had not a belief in the third proposition till after his resurrection; and they perhaps had as much information in respect to the objects of the Messiah's mission as almost any of their ancestors; for they had long been the disciples of Christ, and attendants on his ministry.

A. These consequences are indeed shocking. But does not the gospel, or rather the Messiah himself, say, "He that believeth not in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him?"

B. Truly. But "what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law;" so whatsoever things the gos-

pel saith, it saith to them who are under the gospel, and who have some knowledge of its doctrines and its requirements.

A. It may be so, and I hope it is.

B. Where much is given, much is required; where little is given, a righteous Governor will require the less. Of course, a belief in the doctrines of the gospel is not required of infants, who are incapable of understanding them; nor of the heathen, who have no knowledge of them.

A. This is a consoling doctrine, if it be true; yet I believe there must be the spirit of love and obedience to qualify men for heaven; and how can this take place without a particular knowledge of Christ, and a belief in him who is "the way, the truth, and the life?"

B. Cornelius, the centurion, was "a devout man, one who feared God with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway;" and his "prayers and his alms came up for a memorial before God," prior to his knowledge of Christ as the Saviour of sinners. That Divine Spirit which wrought in Cornelius, prepared him to embrace the messages of the gospel by Peter, as soon as they were made known to him. In the same manner, and by the same spirit, thousands may have been prepared for heaven, who never heard of Christ till they saw him in glory at the right hand of God.

A. How is this consistent with the opinion which many good people entertain, that there can be no true love or acceptable obedience, without a belief in certain mysterious doctrines, which have been termed orthodox?

B. I do not say that it is consistent with that opinion; nor do I believe that opinion to be correct. On the contrary, I believe that there have been thousands who never heard of those mysterious doctrines, who have been as good men, as those who entertain such an opinion of their importance. Some of those doctrines I suspect were unknown to Enoch and Abraham, to Moses and the prophets, and even to Christ and his apostles, unless they were foreseen by them as the inventions and errors of late times.

A. If you believe that men may be saved who never heard of Christ or his gospel, on what principle can you justify the modern missionary exertions to spread the gospel, or even the labours of Paul, among the Gentiles? If we may judge of his views by his conduct, in his opinion it was of great importance that the Gentiles should be brought to know and obey the gospel.

B. That was doubtless his opinion, and I am of the same mind. But can there be no motives for exertions to spread the

gospel, except on the supposition that every soul will be lost who has no opportunity to hear it? Some men are recovered from dangerous diseases without the aid of well-informed physicians, or the application of the best means: does it hence follow that there is no motive for improving the science of medicine? Every dispensation of divine mercy may have been in some measure adapted to the benefit of mankind, and to the salvation of the soul. Yet one dispensation may have been far more favourable than another. The posterity of Jacob were a peculiar people, highly favoured, when compared with the Gentiles. The Gospel dispensation is far more favourable than the Mosaic. Suppose that in proportion to the number of people in the several countries, there are ten times as many saved from under the light of the gospel as from heathen lands; would not the obligations and encouragements to spread the gospel be very great?

A. They certainly would; but not so great as on the supposition, that all are lost who have not the gospel.

B. Be it so; still they are sufficient to justify all the benevolent exertions that ever have been made, or will be made. We have no occasion to represent God as unjust or unkind in his conduct towards the heathen, in order to magnify the riches of his mercy in sending his Son, or in sending to us the news of salvation by him.

A. God is a sovereign in the dispensation of his favours. He gives to one and withholds from another, as seemeth good in his sight. All men are his creatures, and he has a right to do what he will with his own. We should be still, and know that he is God.

B. Amen: still it should be understood that this sovereign God has the heart of a tender parent; that he is wise, just, and merciful, in giving or withholding his favours. It never seems good in his sight to require the improvement of any faculties or privileges which he has not bestowed. He may justly do what he will with his own, because he is invariably disposed to do right. We should therefore be still, knowing that God is as good as he is great, and that his tender mercies are over all his works.

POETRY.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

HYMN FOR EASTER. *A. Wain*

Mr. EDITOR,

There is a very animated air and chorus which I have heard sung with great delight, adapted to a triumphant song on the overthrow of the Egyptians.

"Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea,
Jehovah hath triumphed, his people are free."

The following lines to the same tune, I send you, as more suitable to Christian worship. They are particularly adapted to *Easter day*.

1.

Lift your loud voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen, and man cannot die.

Vain were the terrors that gathered around him,
And short the dominion of death and the grave;
He burst from the fetters of darkness that bound him,
Resplendent in glory, to live and to save.

Loud was the chorus of angels on high,
"The Saviour hath risen, and man shall not die."

2.

Glory to God, in full anthems of joy;
The being he gave us, death cannot destroy.

Sad were the life we must part with to-morrow,
If tears were our birthright, and death were our end;
But Jesus hath cheered the dark valley of sorrow,
And bade us, immortal, to Heaven ascend.

Lift then your voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen, and man shall not die.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE I.

Discourses, chiefly on Devotional Subjects, by the late Rev. Newcome Cappe. To which are prefixed Memoirs of his Life, by Catherine Cappe. With an Appendix, &c. From the second English edition. Boston, Wells & Lilly, 1818.

WE are happy to commence our labours as reviewers, with the notice of a work, which we can cordially recommend; in which we shall have little to censure, and a great deal to praise. The character and writings of Newcome Cappe are not very much known in this country; it is only about a year since this volume was reprinted here. If we can do something to make it known as it ought to be, and promote its circulation, we shall think we have done a worthy service to the Christian cause; for we are persuaded that the example of such a man, and an acquaintance with such sermons, must promote virtue and piety; that no Christians cannot read them without being edified and cheered.

The author himself, of whom an uncommonly interesting biography is prefixed, was born in the year 1733, and died Dec. 24, 1800. He was a man of fine powers of mind, which he cultivated with exemplary fidelity and great success. Dr. Doddridge, under whose care he pursued his theological studies, spoke of him, when quite a young man, as possessing "distinguished talents, adorned with modesty of behaviour and sweetness of temper; preserving the Christian character, and giving hopes of eminent usefulness in the ministry." These hopes were not disappointed. He exhibited through life the same vigor of mind and excellence of character. He devoted himself to the cause of religion; and no one, we think, can read the story of his life without being convinced that he was wholly guided by its influence; without feeling that there is something truly sublime in his piety and faith, and that he was a rare example of the greatness and loveliness of the Christian character.

We cannot stay to enter into the particulars of his life or studies. Our business is with his sermons. It was in sermo-

nizing that he appears to have excelled. He gave much of his time to the critical studies of the scriptures. But he was most at home in the pulpit, and his labours there were the most valuable. His ardent and animated feelings, his deep impressions of piety, his solemn sense of duty and responsibility, his very elevated, enlarged, and cheering views of the government of God, of the purposes of our existence and religion, and of the future world as a retributive state connected with this, rendered him nervous and forcible in his exhibition of religious truths, and uncommonly impressive in his appeals to the conscience. We are confident, that abundant proof of all this may be found in the volume before us. The subjects of the discourses are chiefly, as expressed in the title page, of a devotional cast, regarding principally the relation of man to the Deity and a future state, and of course representing religion more in its pious and spiritual, than in its moral character; but at the same time showing, that its moral character can never fairly be separated.

The three first sermons treat of *Faith*, a subject which lies at the foundation of all religion, and which is capable of being treated in a great variety of ways, according to the particular object to be accomplished. The object here is to prove, that faith is no mysterious, inexplicable principle, added to the natural powers in a religious man; but is one of the natural principles of the mind, of constant use in the affairs and intercourse of this world, in the conduct of our common business and the arrangement of all our plans, and when applied to the business of religion is peculiar only in this, that it is applied to things more important, more distant, and invisible. We cannot enter at large into his views. We can only say, that they appear to us in a high degree clear and rational, as well as consonant to the scriptures. They have this advantage too, of presenting the subject in a tangible form, so that every one may know when he has grasped it, and not enveloped in mist and shadows. The following extracts show sufficiently the spirit and complexion of the whole.

"Faith is a reasonable principle. There is nothing dark, mysterious, or unintelligible in it; nothing for which he who values himself most upon the character of reason, has any cause to be ashamed. It is not an enthusiastic principle that first gives being to dreams and visions, and then supports itself upon imaginations of its own creating. It is not a supernatural impression proceeding from the immediate agency of God, capriciously bestowed where he pleases to bestow it, and denied where he wills it to be denied. It is not an inexplicable feeling of we know not what, conceived we know not how, and cherished we know not why: it is not the persuasion of any thing, whether good or evil, concerning either ourselves

or any other being, taken up without reason, and maintained upon principles that may not be duly specified and explained: it is not any sudden irradiation of the mind, proceeding from whatever cause; for Faith is not more the especial gift of God, than Sight; it is equally the natural and necessary result of the principles that compose the human frame.—To an eye duly formed, present any object of the visible world, and it is seen: to a mind attentive and undepraved, propose the evidence concerning any truth that respects the world invisible, concerning either distant objects, past transactions, or events yet to come, and in proportion to the strength of that evidence, it is *believed*. Whatever persuasion is taken up against evidence or without it, is blind presumption, or romantic imagination, and not Faith.

“Faith is as much the effect of evidence, as sight is the effect of sensible impression; nor is the one more absolutely dependent on its cause, or more closely connected with it, than the other. It is a law of our nature, that in such and such circumstances, we shall see; and it is as much a law of our nature, that in such and such circumstances, we shall believe. If we will be judging of such visible things as are beyond the sphere of clear and distinct vision, no man would call these presumptuous fancies, however strongly we might be attached to them, sight; and in like manner, if we would be judging of things invisible, to which the light of evidence does not reach, no man should call these visions of imagination, Faith: they are both of them the reveries of a capricious or disordered mind; a partial frenzy, which only requires to be extended to a greater multitude of objects, to render the perversion of our understandings both manifest and deplorable.—What sight is in the natural world, with respect to things visible and present, Faith is in the spiritual world, with respect to things absent and invisible: to believe, on sufficient evidence, is as natural as to perceive: and in thus believing, there is nothing more unreasonable, inexplicable, or indefensible, than in seeing with our open eyes the prospect that presents itself before us.

“Faith then is a principle no more peculiar to religion in general, than it is peculiar to the Christian religion in particular. Even those, who most affect to treat it with ridicule and contempt in the disciples of Christ, are themselves obliged, and they are satisfied with the obligation, to act upon it every day and every hour of their lives: it is the very principle which, in the ordinary affairs of life, regulates and governs by far the greater part of their thoughts, their affections, and their conduct.” pp. 94, 95.

After some examples of this, he goes on as follows:—

“Almost all the affairs of life are transacted upon the evidence of testimony and under the influence of Faith; and yet mankind, in all the reproaches they have thrown one upon another, never thought that upon this account they could upbraid, or be upbraided. Even the most licentious ridiculer of this principle never dreamed that he was chargeable with weakness and absurdity for the influence that he allowed it to have over him, and would have joined as heartily in exposing him who totally disowned it in the affairs of this world, as him who abounded in it, in respect to the concerns of another.

“It is in matters of religion only that Faith is so weak, ridiculous, and absurd: for there, instead of gratifying our irregular inclinations, it re-proves them; it calls away the attention of mankind from this present world; it would moderate their attachment to it, and their expectation from it, and would engage them in the pursuit of the invisible and future

things of another world; things in themselves indeed more important, but not so well suited to the taste of the ambitious, the sensual, or the carnal mind. But does the dislike of them destroy their reality? Does it annihilate the evidence of these things? Is it the less certain that they are, or that they will be, because the men of this world are less willing to believe them? Does the reasonableness of Faith diminish, as the importance of its objects rises? Is it reasonable to act upon it in respect of this present life, and not in respect of that which is to come? Is it right that we should be guided and governed by it in regard to the transitory trifles of this present state, and right also that we should disclaim and resist it, in regard to the infinitely more important interests of that which is unchanging and interesting?

If there be a world invisible; if there be a future state into which we are, ere long, to be removed,—if the powers of that world invisible be favourably or unfavourably disposed towards us according to our conduct in the present,—and moreover, if our condition in that future state, will depend upon the preparation we make for it in this, what is the evidence that should determine us to regard these things? The evidence of *sense* is excluded by the very nature of the objects; if this were to be obtained, they could not then be invisible and future; the evidence of testimony is all the evidence we can obtain of such objects, and having this, is it right to treat them as chimeras? to forget, to overlook, or to despise them, as the unsubstantial fictions of a wild imagination?—We could only treat them thus, if we were *conscious* that they were the dreams of our own fancy, and that we had no evidence *at all* concerning them. If it be unjustifiable to give no attention to those things, which if they have a being, are most deeply interesting to us, and of the existence of which we have all the evidence that the nature of them will admit, then, our faith in these things can be no matter of reproach to us; it is a just and reasonable principle.—Will it bear a doubt who acts the wiser part, he, who resisting the evidence of an invisible and future world divests himself of all concern about it, or he, who yielding to the evidence of its reality, attends to it, expects it, and forms his life upon the expectation.

“Can it be reasonable to distrust that principle in regard to the invisible and future things of the eternal world, which we rely upon, which we act upon, in regard to the invisible and future things of the present? What is there that should make a difference? If the testimony in the one case be as credible as the testimony in the other, the Faith is in both circumstances alike reasonable, and he who yields it in the one, and withholds it in the other, who, either in word or deed, in the one case countenances and approves, and in the other, vilifies and depreciates it, has no cause to value himself upon the reasonableness of his character, his own mouth accuseth him, and by his own conduct he is condemned.” pp. 99—101.

Having thus spoken of it as a natural and reasonable, the third discourse is occupied in showing it to be a desirable and important principle. We quote from the concluding paragraphs.

“When we carry forward our thoughts unto futurity, we are compelled to believe, that there is a day, not very distant, which shall be marked by our funerals, when our bodies shall be sealed up in the grave. Should we anticipate that day with greater pleasure, if we believed that the pains and weaknesses which usually lead thither, would be our last sensations? If we believed, that when once the dust to which we were going had received us, we should know and be known no more for ever? Could we

think with greater pleasure of retiring out of this world, if we were ignorant, if we were dubious, whether there were any other scene of being to succeed it? Would the vale of death exhibit to us a more pleasing prospect, if it did not open into another and a more important world? Could we go with greater satisfaction to lay our pious parents, our worthy friends, or our virtuous children in the grave, if we thought that we had then bid adieu to them for ever? Could we stand with so much serenity by the death-bed of the just, if we dared not to encourage our imaginations in following them into nobler life, and to a better world, where ten thousand times ten thousand happy spirits are rejoicing in the friendship of their Maker, and whose number it may be is every moment receiving new accessions? if we knew nothing of the New Jerusalem, of God, of Christ, and the innumerable company of angels, to which all just men, when they have left this fleshly tabernacle, shall be for ever united?

"No, my friends:—it is Faith to which we owe the most cordial consolations, under the heaviest pressures of mortality: it is Faith to which we are indebted for our sublimest pleasures; for it is Faith that discovers to us our virtuous predecessors exalted into all the happiness we could desire for them. It is Faith that teaches us to look upon this life, noble as is the rank we hold in the present world, and great as are the blessings we enjoy in it, as nothing more than the seed-time of human being, the school of our education, the childhood of our existence; and it is Faith that enables us to antedate the happiness of that better state, where our labours shall be recompensed by the noblest harvest, and our nature shall arrive at its full maturity and perfection." pp. 113, 114.

The sermons which come next, "on undue anxiety," and "the duty of thanksgiving in affliction," are among his consolatory discourses; they contain representations respecting the cares and afflictions of life, well calculated to soothe and cheer those that are in trouble.

The seventh sermon is entitled, "Man the property of God;" illustrating the truth, that in every possible sense, man is absolutely and wholly dependent. The conclusion is a good example of the serious and impressive, or, as we may say, the *close* preaching which is often to be found in the volume.

"1. If we be the property of God, how highly reasonable is it, that we should study and obey his will.

"You honour and obey your parents, and herein you do well. If any man feed, and clothe, and provide for you, you are modest, humble, grateful, and herein you do well. You are submissive, respectful, and faithful, to those who are set over you in authority, and herein you deserve our imitation and our praise. If any man deposit his property in your hands, you would dread the very thought of violating your trust, or of injuring your brother, and herein you prove yourself faithful and just. Remember then, that you are the creatures, the dependents, the subjects, the property of God; let your sentiments and conduct towards others, respecting each of these relations, instruct you in the sentiments and conduct which you ought to maintain towards the great Lord and ruler of the world. But more particularly,

"Secondly, If you be the property of God, you have the highest reason to be thankful to him for every comfort, and to be resigned under every affliction.

"Had you been possessed of an independent being, had you been strictly and properly your own, had it been of your own accord that you had received the benefits, and become the subjects, and owned yourselves the property of God, you might then have pleaded that it was not an absolute, but a conditional engagement: you might then have received his bounties, as what were in justice due to you, and murmured against every thing that was unacceptable in your circumstances, as a violation of the treaty you had made with God: but, if you be his without any merit in becoming such; if you be his to do with you whatever seemeth to him good; if you have no claim of right on your Creator, how highly does this consideration enhance your obligations to him for every comfort of your existence? How indecent, how impious, how unnatural is it to murmur at any thing which he may appoint!

"In the third place, If ye be God's, not only by the necessity of nature, but by your own deliberate choice and your own voluntary engagements, consider how highly it behoves you to be steady to your choice, and faithful to your vows. If you suspect that you have determined rashly, think again: consider whether you can find a better master, or engage yourselves in a more gainful service. Remember that it were better for you never to have known the way of righteousness, than after having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto you; and tremble, lest to the guilt of profaneness and of rebellion, you add the accessory guilt of perfidy and falsehood.

"In the fourth and last place, If we be God's, if owning him for our law-giver and our judge, he owns us for his people, and his children, how solid is the ground on which our hopes are built, and how secure our happiness! Whatever comes to us, comes to us for our good, for it comes to us from an almighty friend, who knows our state, and tenderly regards our interests. Though there may be some things in our condition which are not for the present joyous, but grievous, yet if we be God's, God is ours, and if God be ours, what security can we want of an ample indemnification in futurity? Afflictions are very tolerable when they are not the ministers of wrath; and prosperity is doubly acceptable when we can receive it as the testimony of divine favour. The men of the world are apt to boast themselves of their felicity, but if they now prefer the world to God, the time will come, when they will praise the Christian's choice. Their pleasures will decline, his will be improving; their hopes will vanish away, his will be more than realized; their confidence will fail them, but the Christian rests upon the rock of ages. In the time of apprehension and of fear, in the hour of trouble and affliction, in the moment of death, in the solemnities of judgment, they will want, what the world cannot give its votaries; and what God only can bestow. In these trying seasons, when every thing about those who are without God, is dark, and gloomy, and distressing, the Christian, supported by his conscience, and encouraged by the divine promises, can derive light and comfort from the relation that he bears to him in whose hands are the fates of every living thing. When all sublunary comforts have taken their flight, when human friendships can no longer avail, the hope of the Christian remains uninjured, for in this world he placed not his happiness:—he had long fixed it there, where true joys only are to be found, whither he is now going to reap that glorious harvest, the gracious reward of his faith, patience, and obedience; for he knows who it is that hath said, 'be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' " pp. 156—158.

The subject of the eighth sermon, is "The obligation, importance and reasonableness of the love of God." We quote

the following from the last head, in which he is showing the reasonableness of the duty.

“These reflections it were easy to amplify and enlarge, but enough, it is hoped has been advanced to convince you, that the love of God is not a blind inexplicable principle, proceeding we know not whence, and tending we know not whither, and consisting in we know not what; it is not an unaccountable attraction; it is not an unenlightened glow of heart; it is not the overflowing of a sensual joy; it is not the ecstasy of a mysterious devotion; it is nothing above the capacity of all men to understand, or above the power of all men to attain; nothing contrary to, or surpassing human nature: it needs not to hide itself for fear of disgrace, for it has no connexion with the perversion of any human principle; but, on the contrary, it is in the depraved heart alone that it cannot subsist: it has no dependence on ignorance or darkness; on the contrary, it is only from true and important knowledge that it can proceed.

“The love of God is one of the most natural operations of the human heart, the most obvious and self-approved direction of its sentiments; for it is to admire, what is perceived to be truly admirable; to esteem, what is infinitely worthy to be esteemed; and to cherish in our hearts with complacency and delight, the idea of what confessedly deserves our supreme affection: it is, to cultivate a grateful sense of kindness that exceeds our tenderest thoughts, and of beneficence that passeth knowledge.—To be devoid of the love of God, not only betrays an unnatural opposition to the dictates of self-love, and of charity; but also to that other powerful and amiable principle, by whatever name you call it, which recommends all moral goodness to our hearts. It implies a strange insensibility to our own happiness, to the happiness of our brethren, and to the noblest obligations; a criminal prostitution of our affections, and a perverseness and inconsistency of character, alike wretched, deplorable, and guilty.” p. 170.

We are not however to understand by such expressions, that this affection is so natural as to be unavoidable, or even to be easily maintained. We conceive that there are many things, to which the tendency is strong, and yet that tendency may be prevented. Nay, in certain situations there may be such obstacles opposed, as may render it exceedingly difficult to keep the natural direction. Such may be the situation of men in their present existence. They are so formed by their Creator as unavoidably to love goodness, *whenever they have a fair and full perception of it*, and to love the Infinitely Good, whenever they receive a full impression of his character. But here is the difficulty, to receive this impression. The state of discipline, in which they are placed, has many hindrances. Their attention is perpetually drawn away and arrested by other objects, and the most glorious is obscured; so that without careful pains, diligence, reflection, watchfulness, they pass it by unheeded; they do not see it; and, not seeing, of course do not love it. For, intimate knowledge and close perception of the excellence of the Divine character are essential to the

love of it. If a child be not intimately acquainted with its mother, it will not love her; yet love to parents is a natural affection.

Our author, aware of all this, goes on in the next discourse to speak of the circumstances which hinder the growth of this affection, and the care and diligence required to keep it alive. It is full of wisdom, and cannot fail to delight and improve the serious reader. We quote from the first division.

“The very means by which the love of God must make its impression, are themselves capable of excluding it from our hearts, and instead of leading us to him, of engrossing our affection and attention to themselves. The works of God, the laws and events of providence, and even the word of God itself, are all capable of exciting in us many different sentiments, besides the love of him; sentiments that have no connexion with it; and that, in some instances, are even repugnant to it.

“We may gaze upon the works of nature, and be highly entertained with the views that they exhibit to us; we may attend to the course of providence, and be deeply affected by the various scenes through which we pass; we may have the word of God every morning and every evening in our hands, and yet, for all this, the love of God may be a stranger to our hearts—a stranger there it will be, if, whilst we are conversing with his word, his providence, and his works, we have it not in our intention and desire to conceive and to cultivate this affection. Each of them present a variety of objects in every scene that they set before us, capable of exciting a variety of affections: and unless, whilst we contemplate this variety, our attention be particularly and expressly directed to the display manifested by them of those attributes of God, which render him the object of our admiration and love, our minds will be diverted from one object to another, and distracted by a succession of very different impressions and affections.

“To love God, we must have lively apprehensions of his excellencies, and to attain these, our attention must not spend itself on those sensible and external things which comprehend the notices of them; it must not be wasted on the mirror, it must look upon the image it contains; it must not be diverted by any foreign object, but fixed and regulated by the sincere desire, and the express intention to possess our hearts with the love of God. And, after all, to whatever degree of vivacity this affection may be raised by the power of serious contemplation, it will quickly need to be revived again. It is a plant too delicate not to stand in need of constant and unwearied tendance, and perhaps, with all our care, it may be impossible in this world that it should at all times be preserved in equal health and vigour. Yet, the influence of the love of God upon our temper and conduct, may be, and ought to be habitual. To render them habitual however, it is necessary that the impressions of the divine excellencies should from time to time be renewed upon our hearts; that the affection should from time to time be rekindled there, and that the intervals of renewing and rekindling these impressions and affections, should not be too distant.

“Though the effects of any sentiment upon our temper and conduct may remain after the sentiment itself has subsided in our hearts, yet these effects will be impaired by the power of time alone; and the succession of other sentiments will assist the power of time to impair them. The influences of any affection whatever, which survive the affection itself, will be

in proportion, not only to the vivacity in which the affection is conceived, but also to the frequency with which it is cherished and revived.

“They who are best acquainted with the love of God, in whose hearts it is most familiar, and over whose lives it has most power, can tell you, how much this sentiment, and the salutary influences of it, are liable to suffer from the cares of this world; even from the necessary avocations and the indispensable business of life. They can tell you, how this affection needs to be refreshed from day to day, by serious conversation with the works, the providence, and the word of God. They can tell you, what power it derives by withdrawing from the cares and influences of the world, to attend upon the ordinances of religion; and they can tell you too, how necessary a devout and habitual attendance is, not only to its improvement, but even to its preservation. With all their solicitude and care, they do not boast of its vivacity and power; they regret the interruptions that it often suffers, and the weakness in which it often languishes: their comfort is, that God knows their frame and their condition, that they can appeal to him for their sincerity, and trust his mercy as to their imperfection. If, then, we are really desirous that the love of God should retain its due influence, we must, in the first place, exert a constant vigilance to guard against the various unfriendly influences of the many different objects by which we are surrounded, and of the various occupations in which we are necessarily engaged.” pp. 175—177.

The sermon is concluded by some animated and glowing appeals on the utter inconsistency of worldly-mindedness with this holy affection.

There are four other discourses connected with the same subject, showing the incompatibility of the love of pleasure with the love of God, and describing the characteristics of those who are governed by the love of pleasure. And, we must be permitted to say, we consider these discourses among the most admirable we have seen, for their solemn and impressive eloquence, the high standard of moral purity they uphold, and the hallowed spirit of piety they exhibit. And yet, though they allow no quarter to fashionable levity, or vulgar vice in any form, but would sweep them as foul contaminations from God's earth; yet there is nothing like indiscriminate railing against the enjoyments of time; no cynical and fanatic outcry against even the innocent pleasures of life. The preacher keeps his temper, and does not lose sight of his common sense. He begins, as a man of enlarged views would always do, with stating that *every* species of pleasure is not incompatible with the love of God, or religion; well knowing that thus he should gain a greater influence to his reasonings and exhortations respecting those which *are* incompatible. We have not room to quote as largely as we wish. Our readers must be content with a few short extracts, until they can read the whole for themselves.

"It is not when the heart is captivated by the frivolous amusements, or when the eye is dazzled with "the pride of life," that we can see, or are disposed to see the manifestations of the glory of God. So long as our views are attracted by the glare of worldly vanities, or centered on the object of some sensual desire, the discoveries of God's glory, however obvious, and however clear, will elude our observation; they will be to us as if they were not. If the current of our affections be directed towards sensible objects, and the force of habit have once fixed them in that channel, it will carry all our thoughts along with it, and will leave us little inclination, and indeed little power, to employ our attention upon any thing, that has not some obvious relation to those scenes and objects in which we have our principal delight. It avails not that our general apprehensions of God, his character and government, may be just. General apprehensions are always too languid and obscure to awaken the affections of the heart. It is only by a serious and continued attention to the particular displays of the perfections of God, that the correspondent sentiments can be excited in our breasts: while our attention is engrossed by other objects, whatever we may know of him in general, our love to him will not rise." p. 191.

"But our love of God depends upon the moral sensibility of our hearts, for it must arise out of our perception of the moral excellencies of his character. In his eternity, he is awful; in his omnipotence, he is tremendous; it is in the moral glories of his character, that God is the object of our esteem, our veneration, and our love. It is his purity, his equity, his veracity, his fidelity, his love of virtue, his abhorrence of unrighteousness; his attention to the wants, his condescension to the frailties of his creatures, his tender mercies, and his liberal beneficence which extends itself to all his works; these are the perfections that we love in God, and in proportion to our sensibility to the excellence of these perfections, will be the vivacity of the love we bear him. If we discern nothing excellent in these, we shall discern nothing excellent in God, except those attributes of independence and of power, which, separated from his moral glories, would render him an object of terror, rather than of love. If our hearts are become so callous that these moral beauties can make no impression on them, the love of God can have no admittance there." p. 192.

"But to return, You are saying to yourselves, perhaps, that your pleasures are none of them forbidden pleasures, and that you need not to be warned against the practices of which you are not guilty. Indeed, my friends, I would gladly hope, that to warn you against pleasures that are decidedly licentious, to exhort you to beware of criminal indulgencies, whether of appetite or imagination, would be superfluous and impertinent. You, I would willingly persuade myself, have not so learned Christ—You are too well acquainted with his doctrine concerning the conditions of acceptance with your Maker, to think of reconciling the hope of future happiness, with the indulgence, either of the "lust of the flesh, or the lusts of the eye, or of the pride of life" in any forbidden instance, or by any forbidden means. But is it unknown to you, that no man suddenly becomes abandoned? Is it unknown to you, that vice steals into the heart by imperceptible degrees, and acquires her dominion over us in such manner and by such means as may be least alarming? Is it unknown to you, that she allures our approaches towards her, first by one step, in which considered in itself there may be nothing blameable, and afterwards by another, which compared with the former may be very little different from it, till, at length, by differences so minute that they escape our notice, or perhaps even encourage our advances, she accomplishes the greatest revolutions in our character, and alters it from good, to less good, from less good to evil, from evil, downwards through its various stages, till

we arrive at last at the most abandoned? Is this, my friends, unknown to you?—Are you so ignorant of the deceitfulness of sin, of the power of habit, and the influence of example, as, that in an age when the love of pleasure seems to be continually gaining ground upon the love of God, the caution to beware of it should be deemed superfluous? It cannot be. Vice ever lays hold on some natural propensity to bring us into her power; a good reason surely why we should keep an attentive eye and a steady rein upon these principles of our frame that are most seducible, and the more steady, and the more attentive, in proportion as external circumstances favour their undue increase, or encourage and facilitate their corruption.

“If there be, as you have seen there is, a real opposition between the love of pleasure and the love of God, it behoves us at every time and in every scene, to set a guard upon this principle; but, in a scene and at a time in which almost every thing around us, tends to induce, to inflame, and to embolden this principle, it behoves us to be doubly vigilant and resolute to restrain its wanderings, and to check its growth.

“I will suppose, if you will have it so, that you neither are guilty, nor in danger of becoming guilty, of any such voluptuous indulgencies, as, considered singly, and in themselves, are criminal; yet you have no reason to conclude from this, that in respect to the love of pleasure, either your temper or your conduct is what it ought to be. Though none of your pleasurable gratifications, considered singly, be criminal either in their nature or in their degree, yet, notwithstanding this, your character may still be exceedingly inexcusable and unworthy. It is not merely the criminal gratifications of this passion that are inconsistent with the love of God, it cannot consist with even a prevailing taste for pleasure. Where the desire and the pursuit of pleasure have formed and fixed the habits of the mind, there, in that mind, there is no room for the love of God. Sensuality and levity of spirit, though they should be so restricted, by regard to credit, or to interest, or by any other principle, as never to break out into any flagrant violations of the law of God, are, nevertheless, where they constitute the temper of the heart, irreconcilable enemies to the genuine love of God.—Do not then, my friends, soothe yourselves with the thought, that your pleasures are neither of the basest nature, nor indulged to an extravagant degree; consider what your temper is; what are your prevailing affections; what are your habitual pursuits? Is pleasure, not spiritual or moral, but worldly pleasure of some species or other, the idea that first meets you in these several inquiries? You are not then uninterested in any admonition that warns you to beware of the love of pleasure. Do not flatter yourselves with the reflection, that carnality or levity is not your appropriate character.” pp. 205—207.

Take also the conclusion of the whole.

“My friends, you have much to do with God; yourselves and every thing in which you have any interest, are absolutely in his hands. You have far more important transactions with him than any that you are conscious of in this world; it will not be very long before the youngest of this audience will find it so. The time will come, I could tell the day beyond which it will not be deferred, but the day before which it will not come, I cannot tell; the time will come, when you will find this world vanishing away, and another opening upon you, this world of trial ending for ever unto you, and a sense of everlasting recompense commencing. You know as well as I do, would to God that you would let the idea sink deep into your hearts, that the round of this world's pleasures will not last for ever.

The rose will fade, the eyes grow dim, and the heart grow faint, and all that is of this world become incapable of administering even a momentary cordial or amusement. You know as well as I do, would to God that you would let the thought take possession of your souls! that the time will come when the warmest appetites will be cold, when the acutest senses will be dull, when the liveliest fancy will be languid, when the giddiest sinner will be serious, and the drowsiest conscience awake. The time will come, of which your preachers have so often warned you, when your bodies shall be undistinguishable from the dust that flies before the wind, and when that dust shall have as much interest in the gayeties and sensualities of those upon whom it falls, as you! Long before that time arrives, the day may come upon you, when, on a dying bed, while you watch for the moment that is to stop that beating heart, you shall look back upon the life that you have spent, and forward into the eternity that is to receive you. In that awful season, whence will you derive your comfort? to whom will you apply yourselves—to pleasure, or to God? I have seen devotion triumph in the arms of death, but you need not wait until that awful period, to be perfectly persuaded, that pleasure cannot triumph there. It is not the remembrance, that you have loved pleasure more than God, that can give you confidence when you are entering into his presence: it is not this conviction that can comfort your attending friends: if you love them, if you love your own souls, let God have your first attentions, let your duty regulate your pleasures." pp. 232, 233.

Then follow next, two interesting sermons on our Lord's appearance to Mary Magdalene after his resurrection. Then three on the text, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay," in which some circumstances are pointed out in relation to the tomb in which our Lord lay, tending to strengthen the argument for his resurrection; and some reflections are made, not in this writer's usual style, on the religious benefit to be derived from meditating on the place where he was laid.

"David's morning hymn of praise," (psalm xix) is illustrated in the nineteenth discourse; and the two succeeding are occupied in exhibiting "the glory of God as displayed by the heavenly luminaries." They are intended "as an illustration of the manner in which we ought to meditate on the works of God." And they certainly show us how the study of nature may assist our piety, and how even those portions of it which most men regard only with curiosity, may be made subservient to religion, by the desire to "see God in every thing, and every thing in God." Thus the very external appearance of the heavens, the magnitude, rapidity, harmony, of the heavenly bodies, the importance of the sun's light and heat, even the changes of the moon, and the moons of other planets, are all brought forward to illustrate God's glory, and help our devotion. And thus indeed, in the mind of this preacher, various subjects appear to have been associated in some way with religion, which are probably seldom thought of in that connex-

ion, and still more seldom presented in that connexion by the preachers of the gospel. Some may think indeed, that such topics are foreign from the purpose of preaching, and are too far from the revealed truths of the gospel to be proper for the pulpit. But for ourselves, we care not how many things afar off are brought nigh; how many subjects are made to have a bearing upon religious truths, and to be connected with religious feelings. We certainly think it important that men, being, as they are, moral and immortal agents, should never be suffered to forget their nature and destiny, their relation to a higher Being and a better world; and therefore, that preachers should teach them how to contemplate all they meet with a religious eye, and so make all beings, all subjects, all events, subservient to their religious improvement. We conceive it to be the excellence of that admirable book of Paley, "Natural Theology," not only that it proves the existence and agency of God, by proving *design* in all the works of nature, but that it leads us to the habit of noticing that design; so that after we have read that book, we look upon nature and its objects around us with new eyes, we view them in a different connexion, we see them, more clearly than before, touched by the finger of God, and so are drawing perpetual nourishment to our devotional propensities. It is something like this which may be effected by the mode of preaching of which we speak; kingdoms and provinces of nature are taken out of the hand of chance, and drawn away from the gaze of irreverent inattention. We are made to recollect that they are part of God's dominion, and are reminded that religion has to do with something else than a selected list of topics; and instead of being confined to a narrow circle, around which she must be perpetually walking, and from which she is never to depart, is an uncontrolled observer of the whole universe, who may range without limit from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven, and call in, as a handmaid to her service, the least and most distant things.

The three discourses which conclude the volume, are those which were written by Mr. Cappe upon occasion of his recovery from a long and dangerous sickness. They are full of exactly such sentiments as we should expect to fill the mind of a pious man at such a season. We cannot speak of them more particularly; but take our leave with the following extract.

"The visitations of which we speak, that have brought near to death, and have not terminated in it, will be applied by the wise and good man, in his reflections on the feelings of such times, to reduce the over-weenings

of self-esteem, and therefore to quicken him in the culture of the Christian character, and to animate his diligence in all the business of life.

"There is no scene so humbling as the bed of death. In that solemn light, which the near approach of judgment and eternity sheds around us, infirmities are apt to look like iniquities; in that awful hour that enlivens the desire, and takes from him for ever the power, to repair them, there is danger that the good man's errors and failings should rise up in his imagination to the magnitude of faults and crimes. When the end of life is just upon us, it is natural, it is scarcely avoidable, to compare its attainments with its length. Short must be the life, or great the attainments, which upon such a comparison, at such an hour, shall not hold forth to the comparer, much cause of humiliation and regret; opportunities unobserved, neglected, or declined.—Talents, though not misapplied, nor hid, nor unimproved; yet improved but feebly, coldly, and remissly, are not desirable attendants on a dying bed; no self-esteem is to be derived from them; in their aspect there is nothing pleasing; there is nothing soothing, nothing elevating in the language which they hold. Dejection, it may be expected, will accompany them, and it is well, if they do not cast some transient and uncomfortable clouds, on "good hope through grace."

"Christian, thy heart is no stranger to such sentiments; in the hour of devout reflection, how often have they intruded on thy repose! Humility is of the very essence of thy character, and when, drawing nigh unto thy Maker in acts of religious contemplation, or of pious homage, it is natural that self-abasement should spring up within the heart—it may even be, that "his dread falleth on thee," and that "his excellency, maketh thee afraid!"—Yet, I may appeal to you, that your humiliations were never more sincere, your self-esteem never lowlier, the sense of your imperfections never more awakening, and your sense of the divine excellencies more over-powering, if you have ever been there, than on the bed of death.—With what affection was it that you then looked through impending death, to instant judgment, and an opening eternity? It was not terror;—terror was forbidden by divine mercy; it was not confidence, for confidence was repressed by the awful presence in which you were about to appear:—conscious of your own littleness and unworthiness, did you cast yourself wholly on the goodness and mercy of God? Sentiments like these become a creature such as man towards infinite perfection and unspotted holiness, and are highly favourable to Christian diligence and zeal; yet who that has ever felt the tender anguish intermixed with them, would prepare more of it against another hour of serious self-communion, or of approaching death?—Who, that on the bed of death, has compared himself with his great Exemplar; his own conduct with the law of God; his temper, with God's discipline, and his attainments, with his privileges; who, that from such a situation has ever dwelt upon the painful retrospect of his own miscarriages and imperfections, can ever more think highly of himself; or ever more want motives in the future, to repair the past?

"Christians, cherish the remembrance of every scene and of every event which may have reminded you how far you have fallen short of the standard, to which your duty, your honour, your interest, and your comfort required you to aspire.

"While they are present with you, yield your hearts to the penitential sentiments which they awaken, for this is one act of honour unto God; but forget not, that in respect of such visitations, you have not rendered to him *all* the glory due unto his name, till you have pursued the dictates and demands of such penitential sentiments, into the faithful correction, and the diligent improvement of your hearts and lives." pp. 359—361.

We may perhaps be thought to have been speaking rather in the language of panegyric than of criticism. And we confess we have felt no inclination to point out faults in a volume, upon the whole so excellent. Indeed for ourselves we may say, that we do not perceive any faults in sentiment, doctrine, or morals, though we might, if this were the place, point out some of a rhetorical or literary nature. But these are of secondary importance. It is sermons like these which do honour to our religion, and improve the state of Christianity. It is sermons like these, that we wish to have printed and read. Above all, it is such as these, that we wish to have preached. In the high standard of moral excellence they present, in their celestial spirit of piety, their rational and sober and practical views of life, duty, and responsibility, in their animation, their fervor, and directness of address, in all these respects they are specimens of what the discourses of christian ministers ought to be; addresses equally to the understanding and the affections, the reason and the conscience, the intellectual, and moral, and spiritual nature of man. Preachers appear sometimes to forget that men have affections, and speak to them as mere intellect; sometimes to forget that they have understandings, and appeal solely to their passions; sometimes to imagine that all are scholars, and employ language which, to the majority of hearers, is an unknown tongue. In some sermons, the whole connexion of men with the Deity appears to be overlooked; in some, their connexion with one another; and in some, their concern with common sense. Now it is important, that all such errors be avoided. Men should be addressed according to the character and state in which they actually exist. Their whole nature and all their relations should be considered and remembered.

Of this kind of preaching, we have already said, this author affords examples; and we think the preaching which would do good, must have the same general characteristics. It must, in the first place, be *rational*, never losing sight of common sense. For though you may put the reason of some men asleep, and so make them Christians, yet the vast majority in this inquiring age, will not yield to representations which contradict their plain understanding; and therefore the more you approve every thing to men's reason, the more likely will you be to approve it also to their consciences. They must be treated as men, actual men, not as beings of romance or creatures of the imagination. Otherwise they will regard your exhortations as child's play, or the fictions of the theatre.

But this is not enough; preaching must also be *animated, fervent, and pointed*, another characteristic of these discourses. You must paint not only according to the truth, but in lively colours. You must show your hearers that you think the truth important, and are exceedingly desirous, that they should perceive it to be so. Men are so much influenced by sympathy, that they cannot see another greatly in earnest, without being ready to believe, that he has good cause for being in earnest. Here is seen the importance of addressing the affections. The state of men's minds on the subject of religion, is far more a matter of feeling than of reflection. That attachment to the world, which is constantly counteracting the influence of religious truth, is altogether a matter of feeling. And it is to be overcome and altered, not by informing their ignorance, for they already know; not by convincing their understanding, for they are already convinced; but by creating an opposite feeling, by exciting an opposite interest, by presenting images of moral and eternal things in so lively and affecting a manner as to displace those images of earth which now fill and clog the mind. In order to this, you must speak to their feelings, must paint to their feelings, must engage their wishes, their desires, their passions, must interest their hearts. Else, you may convince a thousand, without moving one. Moreover, if men are to be at all interested in the subject, the preacher must do it; they will not excite themselves; they will not go out of their way to seek persuasion; you must bring it to them. They will be cold, except you warm them. A very calm, sober, learned dissertation may be *borne*, may be assented to; but it will leave no impression, for it will excite no emotion.

This animation and fervor, in the next place, must be distinguished by *piety and devotional feeling*. The relation of man to his Creator and Sovereign must never be left out of view. Otherwise eloquence will excite attention but for a season, and produce only a temporary effect. It will not sink into the heart and make a home there, unless the image of God go with it. It is the most excellent thing in these discourses, that He is in all the thoughts. The hearer never loses sight of him; his image is associated with all, and solemnizes all; and therefore the impression is lasting. And we believe, that sermons will always be found efficacious, in proportion to the solemnity, the elevation and purity of the devotional sentiments they contain, and the frequency, or rather constancy, with which they are presented.

We will only prolong this article to express a wish, that those who value impressive eloquence, pure morals, and fervent

christian piety, and desire to promote in themselves and others the religion of the gospel, would acquaint themselves with this volume; and, that the publishers may be encouraged to present to the public, a second volume, "chiefly on practical subjects."

ARTICLE II.

The Constitution of the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, together with their Annual Report for the year 1818, and a list of the Officers and Members of said Society. Boston, Sewall Phelps, Dec. 1818.

THE pamphlet before us contains the sixth annual report of the Society by which it is issued, and presents to our notice a series of facts and statements, which have a strong claim upon the immediate attention of the public, and ought to arouse us to determined and persevering exertions. It obliges us to realize the extent to which habits of intemperance exist; the actual increase, at least, in this metropolis, of the number of those who are addicted to them; and the magnitude of the effects which they produce upon the comforts, the health, and the lives of a considerable proportion of our fellow-beings. We certainly are not sufficiently awake to a sense of the importance of the subjects, which occupy the attention of this society. We are too apt to view the intemperate as individuals only, who have severally brought misery and disgrace and disease upon themselves, and perhaps upon their families, by an unlimited indulgence in a favourite propensity—and not in a collective character, as a class of men whose vices and excesses have an immense effect upon the moral and political state of society. Private vices, it may be thought, are not fairly the subjects of public interference; but when private vices entail a lasting burden and disgrace on the whole community; when they not only destroy the character, the fortune, the happiness of the individual himself, but infect those of all around him, and in their ultimate consequences sap the foundations of public virtue, and lower the standard of public morality, they become the legitimate objects of public attention. There is certainly no other vice, whose influence is so debasing and degrading, both in a moral and intellectual point of view, as that of Intemperance; none, which exhibits in so humiliating a light to human pride, the weakness, the frailty, the littleness of human nature.

This Society has now been in existence nearly seven years ; but in this time, it can hardly be expected that it should have produced any very sensible change. Indeed a central and general institution like this, can never, itself, have any considerable direct effect. It must act as the point of union and the organ of excitement to others, formed on the same plan, but upon a less extensive scale, and more adapted for immediate operation upon the habits of the people. Its objects must be answered by the establishment, under its guidance and patronage, of auxiliary branches, who are to carry into effect all the active measures of the society. In this way, as we are informed by the report before us, considerable progress has been made. There are already "forty affiliated societies ;" but we lament, that out of so large a number, only six should have transmitted any account of their labours and their success.

Yet even from the little which has been made public in the present report, we gather many circumstances which augur well for the future success of the institution. The auxiliary societies already formed, appear to have entered upon their undertaking with the proper spirit and views, and to be composed of influential and respectable characters. We extract with peculiar satisfaction, the following passages from the Report of the Yarmouth Society for the Suppression of Intemperance.

"A number of the inhabitants of this town, who have been accustomed to use ardent spirits freely, have wholly laid it aside, and whether journeying or labouring, by sea or land, have experienced no inconvenience from the want of it. Several vessels have, the year past, performed their voyages without any Spirit, and one of said vessels, a fishing vessel, made the most successful voyage of any in the vicinity. We have no hesitation in giving it as our opinion, that not so much as one-fourth part of the ardent spirit has been used in this town, the year past, as in former years.

"The vending of ardent spirits, taken in all its bearings and effects, is undoubtedly a profitable business. But we have the pleasure and pride to state, that our retailers of spirituous liquors, preferring the public good to their immediate interest, have not only voluntarily given up the business, but joined our Society, and taken an active and efficient part." p. 15.

We would quote also the following paragraph, relating to information received from an auxiliary society in Dedham, principally on account of the evidence it affords, of the efficacy which may attend institutions of this kind, conducted with steadiness and resolution. Their communication, says the Report,

"Suggests encouragement, from the consideration, that the existence and exertions of this and similar institutions have given alarm to people of

a certain character and description, lest they should be 'stopt in the career of their darling vice.' This they deem favourable, evincing, that they are not 'regarded with indifference, or as destitute of influence.' It offers as another ground of encouragement, that they have reason to think, 'that some progress has been made towards a reformation, with respect to intemperate habits.' It states, for this purpose, the beneficial result of interviews of a committee of that society with the respectable board of selectmen of the town of Dedham. As of the same tendency, it informs the society, that 'in one instance at least, during the past year, the practice of retailing spiritous liquors by the glass has been laid aside. It gives us great satisfaction to become acquainted with this fact, because it induces us to hope, that this good and praiseworthy example will be followed by others.' "

It is obvious, that a considerable effect must be produced upon the general feeling of the community, by the association, the exertions and the example of so large a body of men of character, as are or will be united in the objects of this Society. Wherever the Institution extends, the votaries of Intemperance must be sensible of its existence and of its influence. It will act in a manner as the protector and guardian of public morals, and as a restraint upon those who are viciously inclined, but have not yet thrown off their respect for the better part of society. In fact, this regard for the opinion of the wise and virtuous, is the last good feeling which deserts us in the career of vice. It is to this, then, we must appeal, when religion and conscience have pleaded in vain; and, judiciously managed, it may be so operated on, as to reclaim, when every other motive has been presented without effect. It is on this principle, that much of the salutary operation of the secondary societies must depend. It is true, that something of this influence might be exerted by the same individuals without their connexion in the form of a society. But we do not believe the effect could be so great. They would not have the same motives for the exercise of their influence, nor the same support in their exertions; there would be no concert in their measures, and besides, their purposes would not be so directly and definitely, nor so perpetually brought into the view of the subjects themselves. If these institutions are conducted with zeal and energy, the intemperate will feel as if they were constantly watched, as if they were always the subjects of observation to those, for whose characters they have the greatest respect, and whose good opinion and countenance cannot but be desirable to them. They should have it in their minds, that some one is constantly taking note of their conduct; for under no other kind of temptation is it so dangerous to leave a man entirely to himself and his own resolutions. Whatever be his principles

and intentions, and his firmness in other circumstances, in this trial they are too apt to fail him. Restraint must generally come from without, for all motives which arise from within, melt away before the glow of this detestable inclination.

We do not pretend that by influence of this kind, the *intemperate* can be thoroughly reformed, or that they can by such means become characters of pure and consistent virtue. In fact, we do not calculate that the most important effect of our exertions is to be upon those who are already the slaves of this inveterate propensity. The cure of such, there is too much reason to fear, would be a hopeless attempt. But if their excesses can be checked, if the contagion of their example can be prevented, if the young can be inspired with a dread, an abhorrence of the vice, much, very much, will have been gained. It is indeed on the young, that all hopes of a radical reformation must depend. Our measures must be calculated to operate as preventives, and we cannot look for their full effect in our own generation; it will only be after another race has grown up to fill the places of their parents, with habits which have never needed to be reformed, that we can hope the change to be established upon a permanent foundation.

We are presented by the report with the result of some calculations and investigations, which have been made with regard to the state, means, and consequences of intemperance, in this vicinity, and particularly in this town. We should be glad, had we room, to extract their whole account; but must restrict ourselves to a few quotations, and an abstract of the remainder.

“In a year beginning the first Tuesday of July, 1808, there were granted in this county (Suffolk) 44 licenses to innholders, and 326 to retailers—total 370. In a year commencing the first Tuesday of July, 1817, 11 licenses were granted to confectioners, 362 to retailers, 120 to victuallers, and 43 to innholders, two of which were for Chelsea, amounting to 536 licenses of all descriptions.”

It appears by some accurate calculations which follow the preceding extract, that the number of licenses granted in the year 1817, exceeded by 57, that to which they should have amounted, had they continued to bear the same proportion to the population of the town as in 1808; and that for the year 1817, “there was one place established which might furnish the means of intemperance to every twenty-one male inhabitants, sixteen years old and upward, in this metropolis.” A fact is also stated with respect to the kind of licenses, which affords us at once a proof and a cause of the melancholy increase of intemperance among us; that in the year 1817 there were *three*

times as many authorized places of resort, where spiritous liquors might be bought, mixt, and drunk upon the spot, as in the year 1808 !

Of the inevitable consequences of intemperance—poverty, disease and premature death, it may be thought useless to accumulate proofs. The statements of the Report, however, are so striking, and at the same time so well authenticated, that it is desirable the results should be as widely circulated as is possible.

“Two-thirds,” we learn, “are brought into the Almshouse in consequence of intemperance; and it is the opinion of the present attending physician of that Institution, that this proportion falls short of the truth. Two-thirds, then, of the expense of the poor list in this town, viz. \$ 25,000 annually, may fairly be charged to the account of the pernicious use of ardent spirits.”* p. 9 and 10.

But this is not all. “A year of recent date was taken; and it was found, that of the adults, including those of the Almshouse, whose deaths were enrolled that year, one fifth part were well known as persons of intemperance, whose lives were undoubtedly terminated by its immediate effects, or by diseases occasioned or accelerated by it. One third of the deaths at the Almshouse, within the same period, were of individuals of this description. The characters of many of the foregoing adults were not ascertained, otherwise the proportion would probably have been increased. These fatal instances were not confined to the poor and laborious. They were found in the higher, as well as lower conditions of society, if not in an equal degree. Competence did not secure against this baneful habit. Riches and refinement had their share in the crime and misery. The calamity did not end here. About one fourth of the unhappy victims were of that sex, to which we look for the greatest delicacy of sentiment, and the strictest propriety of conduct.” p. 10.

From the various facts which are brought before the public in this Report, as well as from other means of judging, we cannot doubt that the vice of intemperance is still upon the increase in this town, although we are given ground to believe, that in the country in the vicinity, some check has been given to its progress. Part of this increase, directly among us, may, we think, justly be attributed to the great influx of foreigners of the lower orders, still more to the existing and increasing facility with which the means of indulgence are attained by even the poorest individuals. This facility proceeds principally

* We venture to add, in addition to the statements of the Report, the following, which has been drawn from the records of the public dispensary in this town, in only one district. Of 187 cases relieved by that Institution, 89 were females above the age of 16; of these, 15 were openly known to be addicted to the excessive use of ardent spirits; and of these, six were heads of families; the whole number of whom was 47. Of 44 males above 16, 23 were drunkards; and of 33 of these, heads of families, 13 were of the same description.

from the great number of places at which spiritous liquors may be procured in small quantities, and from the very low price at which they are sold. To the multiplication of such places of resort, there seems to be no end. Scarce an alley so obscure or so remote, but we meet with the public license, glittering in letters of gold, held out, an invitation and a welcome to these thresholds of infamy. It is in such places, that the final blow to sober habits, and consequently to all future respectability and happiness, is too often given. It is here that the drunkard is made. The beginner has no temptation to intoxication in the bosom of his family; and besides, the sense of shame alone, in him who is yet unhardened, would prevent him from the exposure of his infirmities to his wife and children, little, as he comes at last, to regard it. But in the *dram-shop* such motives cannot operate; they are at a distance, and he is not sensible of their influence. At the intervals or the conclusion of labour, a sense of weariness seems to ask for that relief, which liquor temporarily affords; company and association operate as an additional inducement, and the fatal step is taken. He meets perhaps with those somewhat more advanced than himself, somewhat more confirmed in their habits; and their example and conversation strengthen the temptation. There is something attractive to vulgar minds; nay, we blush to say it, to those who would consider it an insult to be classed among the vulgar, in the excitement, the hilarity, the jovial recklessness, which are the primary effects of the stimulus of ardent spirits. The young feel too often an ambition to partake in the same kind of enjoyment; they admire the gay and hearty laugh, the ready jest, and even the blasphemies or obscenity which scarcely sound harshly from such merry lips. All this they think cannot be very wrong, for no harm is meant; they imitate the example, and are lost. This evil might certainly be remedied in some measure, by the exercise of public authority. There can be no objection from any quarter, to an adaptation of the number of licenses to the real or supposed necessities or convenience of the community. From no source can an application to authority so properly proceed, as from the General Society; and a measure of this kind is suggested by one of the auxiliary societies.

“We hope we shall not be thought presuming, when we further respectfully submit to the consideration of that Society (the Massachusetts Society) the propriety of an address from their body to the Courts of Sessions in the several counties, and selectmen of the several towns, calling their attention to the manifold evils of intemperance, and soliciting the aid of their influence, and the exertion of the powers with which they are entrusted, in checking these evils.” p. 19.

Public authority also can interfere to increase the expense of habits of intoxication; and whenever circumstances have rendered this interference necessary to effect an augmentation of revenue, the influence upon the habits of society has generally been favourable. It has been asserted, on good authority, that the number of drunkards and the deaths consequent on intemperance, have considerably diminished in London within sixty years; and this change has been attributed principally to the higher prices produced by the increase of duties upon ardent spirits. We are informed also, in this report, that the number of licenses in the counties embraced by their inquiries, was much lessened during those years, in which the prices of liquor were raised by the duties imposed on distilleries. There are surely none so fairly the subjects of taxation, as those who are wasting their substance and their health in this pernicious species of luxury; and yet strange as it appears, there have been no taxes so unpopular, none so unwillingly imposed, or so gladly repealed, as those upon ardent spirits.

But to ensure the co-operation of public authority, an influence must first be exerted upon public opinion. There are certain prejudices and customs existing, more or less, in all classes, whose constant tendency is to keep up the free indulgence in the use of spiritous liquors. Among these we allude particularly to the universal, but most unfounded opinion, that they are necessary to support the strength of those occupied in bodily labour. It is important, that this mistaken notion should be done away. It would be easy, were this the place for such discussion, to offer sufficient evidence of the total fallacy of the common impression on this subject. But it is certainly very much in the power of the auxiliary societies to do away the common prejudices and common practice among the labouring poor, would they only unite and persevere in the resolution, not to allow the use of spirit among those whom they employ as labourers, and never to employ those who wilfully and obstinately persevere in habits of excess.

Many of the customs of civilized and social life, it must be obvious, are of a nature to encourage the vice it is our object to avoid. What these practices are, it is unnecessary to detail; some of them more prevalent in the interior than in our larger towns, are alluded to in the following extract. Speaking of the communication from the Dedham Auxiliary Society, the Report observes:

“Their report expatiates freely on the evils resulting from the perversion of the design of tavern licenses; on the custom too prevalent in that part of the country, of distributing liquors at public sales, and thereby

'bribing one to pay more for an article, than in his sober moments he would be willing to give, or inducing him to purchase what he does not want;' on the impropriety of exhibiting 'a variety of liquors to excite sensual desire, on those occasions when we bid a last adieu to the remains of a departed friend;' and on 'the practice of what is called *treating*, at the election of candidates for any public office, as calculated unduly to influence electors, and as incompatible with pure republicanism.' It concludes, by binding the 'importance of increasing the influence of precept by that of example. Abstain from all appearance of evil.' "

We are sensible that many are accustomed to think, that all formal attempts for the reformation of the morals of society are hopeless, and therefore useless. But we do not despair. By unremitted exertions, and the constant extension of societies, public opinions and habits will finally be affected. The subject must be frequently and obstinately pressed upon the attention, on every proper occasion, and in every proper way. Temporary want of success ought not to discourage. We must not believe our measures are ineffectual, because we cannot see their effects. The river deposits the alluvia of the mountains for centuries at its mouth, before it rises above the surface of the ocean; but it comes in time to be the seat of vegetation, and the residence of man. If another generation is to feel the effects of our endeavours, they are not therefore less valuable or meritorious. The less our purposes relate to ourselves, the more remote the objects to be benefited by their success, in the same proportion the virtue of our exertions is increased, and their reward will be enhanced.

ARTICLE III.

Reasons offered by Samuel Eddy, Esq. for his opinions, to the First Baptist Church in Providence, from which he was compelled to withdraw for heterodoxy. Second edition. Jones & Wheeler, 1818. Boston, sold by Wells & Lilly.

To those who consider the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Divine Nature as making a part of the system of Christian theology, it must have appeared, we think, a perplexing phenomenon, that it has ever been called in question. Reasoning from the acknowledged principles of the human constitution, we might say that it is just such a doctrine as would be likely to gain and secure a willing reception with the mass of men; just such a doctrine as, if they could not find, they would

make. Not that it recommends itself by any appearance of truth to a sound mind. This it certainly does not. The understanding, fairly exercised upon it, rejects it with as decided a dissent as it would any other of the most express contradictions that words can form. But in matters of religion it is the universal tendency to give excessive exercise to the imagination and feelings. Men love mystery; and so great a mystery relating to the object of worship, is what, above all things, they would enjoy. They delight in the unintelligible; for it carries to them a show of magnificence. They imagine they do religion the best possible service by multiplying its peculiarities; and they are sensible that, in making it a completely unreasonable thing, they distinguish it at a stroke, most surely and widely, from every other subject with which their thoughts are conversant.

The advocates of the doctrine of a triple division of the divine nature represent the opposition which has been made to it as founded in the natural inclinations of the mind; to us it appears exactly the reverse, and our view is justified by history. Immediate divine interposition had no sooner ceased, than the doctrine of the strict and proper Unity of God, familiarly known in the early ages, was forgotten, and a monstrous polytheism spread itself over the world. It became necessary that a single people, peculiarly privileged and governed, should be made the trustees, so to speak, of a truth which in better times, but not then, men might be brought to receive. Guarded as it was among this people by a most precise and unequivocal revelation, and perhaps still more by their national pride, indulged in calling the only God, the God of *their fathers*, it remained uncorrupted so long as it was confined to them. But when it was handed over again to the world at large, again it underwent a fortune similar to the first. Experience had taught men not to avoid their error, but only to disguise it. They had learned but to cover up irreconcilable ideas with dark words; to call the self-contradictory, mysterious; and this method made their faith in scripture and their love of their own imaginations friends at once.

We do not mean to say that the persons, who between the first century and the sixth were engaged in framing the received doctrine, were influenced only by the natural love for the incomprehensible. They had more immediate objects; to reconcile Christianity with the prevailing systems of philosophy, and to remove the reproach of the cross. But the common illiterate people had no such views; and it was only by feeding their taste for the marvellous, that they could be drawn away from the true sense of scripture.

These are the recommendations which the Trinitarian doctrine carries with itself to the mass of men; which aided in causing it to be received at first, and are a wall of fire about it now that it is received. But it leans still more securely, if possible, on foreign supports. Every age that has passed since its reception, has placed it on higher ground. A large proportion of the wise and good men, who have lived in the interval, have lent it the authority of names, which would never have appeared on that side, if they had fallen on better times. It has been infused, with an anxious diligence, into the springs where men go to refresh their faith and piety; and many must drink there, or thirst. It is found in almost all the great establishments of religion and learning, in a close association with what is really venerable and inspiring; sheltering itself under their patronage, and demanding honour with their lips. It commands a great share of the influence of the writers and writings of the day. Many defend it, for it is a ready way to popularity and gain; and few assail it, for to assail it hazards both.

The contrast between the condition of this triumphant doctrine, and that of the scripture doctrine of the Unity of God, is so decided (we were about to say so discouraging, but we have not so studied the divine dispensations, as to despair of the final victory of religious truth) so decided that we cannot but feel backward to state it. Not an established church in the world receives it. Not a national institution of learning in the world defends it. It has no great instruments of proselytism in the form of religious charities. It appears on the title page of no tracts, printed in editions such as might supply a great portion of all who read one language. It is no where a recommendation to office or influence; so far from it, that to call a man, a Unitarian, is with many to impeach his piety, and with some, we fear, to question his honesty. It is the plain simple truth of God, and that is all there is to recommend it.

This then is the statement. The received doctrine has a firm support in the natural partialities of the mass of men, and in all the foreign aids which can confirm the authority of an opinion in the public sentiment. Yet so it has happened, (and let those who deny that it is the study of God's word which has produced it, account for the fact) that from the date of the Reformation the doctrine of the divine unity has been continually gaining ground, and is still advancing, conquering and to conquer. If we were inclined to urge its prevalence as an argument for its truth, we might assert without fear of contradiction, that taking from the body of trinitarian Christians only those who have some definiteness in their ideas, who have con-

sidered the subject and know whereof they affirm, and dividing them into their separate classes according to their various explanations of it, that is separating from each other those who really hold different sentiments, each class would number fewer adherents than the number of those who reject it. But our object is not so much to urge this, as to state the impossibility of accounting for the fact of the Unitarian doctrine being received by such persons and in such a manner, as it has been received, on any other ground than that of its being the sense of scripture.

We shall limit our remarks to its progress among ourselves, because, though the course has been similar in the parent country, the facts which we might state would not be so familiar to our readers. It has grown up here under every circumstance of discouragement. The soil was parched and the sky inclement, and nothing but the strongest principle of growth could have urged it upward. Our early settlers answered exactly to the description of the venerated Robinson. "They have come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw. Whatever part of his will our good God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things." Thus it remained till the habits of the country were formed, till its institutions were well established, and had begun to operate with their mighty machinery on the forming mind, as if it had been the design of Providence to accumulate obstacles, and show how scripture truth can bear them all away. A century ago there was not an avowed Unitarian of any note in the country. Now the doctrine has many advocates; men too of intelligence, learning, and piety; men who read their Bibles, and pray that they may read them profitably. And it has not been forced on them by others, who have received it and then busied themselves in making proselytes. It has made its way with nothing to aid it, but the careful study of the sacred writings, and with every thing else against it. The reception of it has been the result of the solitary inquiries of solitary individuals; of individuals too who have trembled as they learned it, for they knew that in becoming wiser than their neighbours, they must either lose their honesty and self-respect by concealing their convictions, or by publishing them incur the forfeiture of reputation, friends, and often of the means of living. It has reared

its head in the strong holds of the popular doctrine. In Boston, once the very Vatican of Calvinism, it is professed by many and serious Christians. Along our sea-coast it has almost ceased to be dreadful, and it is not a thing quite unheard of in our western counties. In Connecticut it is stifled as fast as it appears; but they will learn, by and by, it is only cutting off limbs, which the body can reproduce and multiply. In 1805, an ecclesiastical council dismissed Mr. Sherman, for the crime of embracing it, from his charge in Mansfield in that state, contrary to the wishes of both church and society. In 1811, after a quiet ministry of fifteen years, Mr. Abbot of Coventry followed his example in honesty and suffering; and, nothing deterred by this, Mr. Wilson of Brookline pursued the same course something more than a year ago. Nor is the doctrine confined to one section of the country. In Charleston, South-Carolina, there is a flourishing church, the pastor and associates of which embraced it without communication from abroad. In Philadelphia there is a temple to the only God. In Baltimore, a large and growing Unitarian society have lately chosen for their pastor a gentleman, who, without any thing of the zeal of proselytism, has spirit and ability to defend their belief. Nor is it confined to one order of Christians. Many of the communion of Baptists have received it, and some, we are told, of high literary name among them. In this town there is a society of professed Unitarian Baptists; and if we are not misinformed, some who repeat the Litany would be well pleased with the omission of the three addresses following the first. Religious knowledge in its universal progress is diligently sowing the grain of mustard-seed, and our children, if not we, will be shaded by its magnificent branches.

Mr. Eddy is one of those whom diligent study of scripture has led reluctantly to the rejection of the received belief. We copy his account of the course of his inquiries, because it is an account of the course of inquiry of almost all who come to the same result. Few, perhaps none, start in it with their minds fairly opened to the evidence against the Trinitarian doctrine; and as they proceed, every feeble argument in its favour which the examination wrests from them, is relinquished with a pain and disappointment, such as one might feel in detecting a flaw in the finished demonstration of the most beautiful system of the world. On one account it is happy that it is thus. Conviction once produced, there is less ground to doubt that it is just, when all the feelings and prepossessions were combined to oppose it.

"The common doctrine of the trinity was received by me, as it is by most others, without examination. I had, as you probably have, taken it for granted, without investigation, to be the truth of revelation; and for a time, that faith in it was necessary to constitute the character of a Christian. (I am happy however in saying, that this was but a *short* time.) And so strong was my prejudice on this subject, that notwithstanding the contrary faith was frequently a subject of conversation, I never once gave *that* side of the question any attention. As far as I can recollect, false arguments, seriously adduced in proof of the underived power and proper deity of Christ, first turned my mind to a consideration of this subject. As I read the scriptures, passages presented themselves in a light in which I had never before viewed them, and my doubts increased. As I had read nothing against the received doctrine, I was determined to satisfy my mind from the only correct source of information. Whatever the true doctrine might be, I was persuaded that it must appear in the New Testament. To that I therefore had recourse. And that I might have the whole evidence on the subject before me at once, as far as possible, I transcribed every word, from the beginning of Matthew to the end of Revelations, which appeared to me to bear on the question. The result was a full conviction, that the Father was the only true God, and that Christ was not the Father, or that being whom Christ asserts to be the only true God."

The author of these pages is a man of high standing and unimpeached character. He has filled, and now fills, important public offices; and we risk nothing in saying, that there is no man among us who can found on weight of character, on conscientious love of truth as a thing to be earnestly sought and frankly professed, and, to judge from his work, on humble piety and a Christian temper, a better title to be heard. He was for many years a prominent member of the first Baptist Church in Providence, Rhode Island, and, as we have been told, was always regarded by his brethren as an Israelite indeed, till in an evil hour, he became a suspicious character, by forbearing to join in the service of a doxology to the triune God, and immediately became an object of reprehension with those who make themselves busy with other people's errors, and a cause of painful solicitude to the church. The first expressed their regret and pity in the customary way, and the church summoned him before them, to learn from himself whether it were true, that he worshipped the God of his fathers in the way which they called heresy. He offered them an account of his scheme of belief expressed in scripture language, and protested against their right "either by the laws of Jesus Christ, or the principles on which their church was founded," to discipline him for any supposed error in sentiments which he had avowed. This was not satisfactory; and at a subsequent meeting of the church he opened to them his views more fully. Still they remained inflexibly convinced of

his crime, and their right to punish it ; and as we learn from the title page of his little publication, compelled him to withdraw from their communion. In what manner we are not told ; but we suppose with the usual expressions of mingled reproach, commiseration, and contempt, which the confident in goodness think a little better than the erring deserve, but becoming their moderation to give. Thus denounced by his brethren, and called on for a vindication of his consistency, he gave these pages to the public, who may find in them evidence, that a man can be an Unitarian without being ignorant or thoughtless, and a controversialist without being angry.

This pamphlet is not to be considered as a set defence of the Unitarian doctrine. It has a local reference, and is rather the writer's justification of himself in professing that belief, and protest against the right of others to molest him in it. It is composed of the papers which he read to his inquisitors at the two interviews we have named. The first, except a few words of caution to them not to persist in their design of censuring him, consists of a sketch of the author's views of the nature and some of the attributes of God, and of the nature, origin, dignity, qualifications, office, and exaltation of the Saviour. It is drawn up in scripture language, and as such, none we should think need fear to read it, for what it expresses has the authority which the sanction of the sacred writers gives. The second is a more elaborate development of his views. After giving, in the passage which we have extracted, an account of the progress of his opinions, he proceeds to examine the question, whether, by the laws of Jesus Christ, or the principles on which the church to which he was held accountable was founded, his opinions rendered him a subject of church discipline, and, arguing from the want in the New Testament of any precept or example which will meet the case ; from the positive example of our Lord and his apostles in not retiring from the communion of the Jews ; from the entire impossibility, considering the different capacities, love of investigation and opportunities of private Christians, that a real and thorough uniformity of opinion should exist ; from the truly catholic practice of the Baptist churches in better times ; and from the express authority of scripture, decides it in the negative. He proceeds then to shew, (the conclusion we must be allowed to think too modest) "that however unscriptural his opinions may be, in the view of the church, they are such as an honest man may entertain without the charge of ignorance or irreligion." He states (and let who can refute him) that the Jews, selected and qualified for depositaries of the doctrine

of the divine unity, knew nothing of one God in three persons; and that neither Christ, his forerunner, nor his apostles, spake of such an one. What remains is a brief and close statement of the grounds of the author's "belief, that there is but one only self-existent and true God, and that Jesus Christ is not that being;" in which the testimony of our Lord concerning himself, and that of his apostles concerning him, are separately considered. He states his rule in the investigation of the subject to have been, "to construe passages of doubtful import by those which are plain and unequivocal, and to consider Christ's declarations of himself to be of primary regard;" and he appears to have adhered to it faithfully, and has certainly used it with success.

It will be seen from our account of Mr. Eddy's conduct of the argument, that it is plain, brief, and popular. It has no great peculiarity, except as far as on the tritest subjects a man of independent discriminating mind will give an individuality to what he writes. There is one particular, however, which somewhat distinguishes it. The distinct personality of the Holy Spirit is the part of the trinitarian scheme, which they who have advocated it have found to labour most, and accordingly they have had the address to keep it most out of sight. It may safely be said, that, with all the art which can be employed in wresting scripture by false explanations to prove what it never would have suggested, in favour of this part of the received doctrine there can scarcely be made to appear a decent pretence of evidence, and, but for the three principles of the Platonists, it is most improbable that the framers of the system of Christian metaphysics would ever have thought of more than two persons in the Godhead. The orthodox doctrine is, there are three distinct equal persons in one God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and it falls to the ground whenever the distinct personality and equality of either of the three persons is disproved. It is overthrown when the Son is proved not to be equal with the Father; or if it be shown, that the Holy Ghost is not a distinct existence from the Father yet equal with him, it is overthrown as well. But the argument has generally been so managed, as if to prove the equality of the Father and Son was to prove the doctrine of the trinity. Here its advocates have had the advantage of engaging on their own chosen ground, and have been careful to keep it. By the false methods of interpreting scripture which now prevail, texts may be brought together, which will give some speciousness to the argument in favour of the equality of the Father and Son, when addressed to some minds; but the worst

methods of interpretation, bad as they are, and all the ingenuity of controversy, dexterous as it is, cannot give a plausibility to the alleged scriptural proof of the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit. Here the trinitarian doctrine is most accessible, and here it ought to be assailed. All its advocates have been pressed with this difficulty. We know not what solution the rest have given of it. That of Epiphanius is this, and perhaps on his ground it would not be easy to find one more satisfactory; "the apostles writing by the inspiration of the Spirit, he did not choose to introduce much commendation of himself, lest it should give us an example of commending ourselves."

We repeat this, because we think it deserves more attention than it has received. There are three propositions essential to the received doctrine; they are these:

There is a separate existence, God the Father.

There is a second, God the Son, equal with the Father.

There is a third, God the Holy Ghost, equal with the Father and the Son.

If either of these propositions is disproved, the doctrine which they go to compose is disproved with it. The first all Christians agree in. The second and third some deny. The third is the most clearly without support, yet has been the seldomest assailed.* Mr. Eddy has spoken of the utter deficiency of evidence for it, but he has not followed his remarks to the consequences which they manifestly admit.

We are pleased with Mr. Eddy's work, because it takes up the argument on purely scriptural ground. Here it is that we always wish to see it maintained. To us indeed the doctrine of the trinity plainly appears to be self-contradictory; and we might reason *a priori*, that it could not make a part of a revelation from God; for what is self-contradictory cannot be true, and what is not true cannot come from him, whom the works of nature declare to be a God of veracity, because of benevolence. But it is useless to reason on the impossible supposition, that such satisfactory evidence as we have for the divinity of the scriptures, and such intuitive evidence as we have against a contradiction,† should run counter to each other; and it is idle

* On this subject we wish to be entirely secure from misapprehension. The agency of the Spirit of God in affecting the hearts of men, and in various offices of divine benevolence, we admit most willingly and gratefully. It is its personality, as a separate subsistence from the Father, to which we say the scriptures give no countenance.

† To acquit ourselves of the charge of having made any over-statement in calling this doctrine a contradiction, we give the following extract from a work of one who thought it very true and important. Let any plain

to prove what must be, when we can look and see what is. We receive the scriptures for the word of God. The question then as to any article of faith is, *Is it written there?* As to that of which we speak, we do not care to see it shown how shocking to the original principles of belief it is, but we would always identify the defence of its opposite with the defence of this proposition; the doctrine of the Trinity is not taught in holy scripture, but the reverse is most explicitly taught. Here let it be tried, and by this stand or fall. All that, as well wishers to the cause of pure and undefiled religion, all that we wish as to this disputed article of faith, is, that it may be examined fairly on its merits by the infallible test of revelation. With the Bible in their hands, it is not impossible that men may now err, for there are a thousand solicitations of early impression, of example, and of association of one part of the scheme of belief with another, to betray the judgment. But with a careful and serious study of it, and with continual effort and earnest prayer to be led to the true understanding of it, the mind will be extricated by degrees from the toils which have been so long weaving to embarrass it, and may grasp at

Christian say, whether he can find in scripture support for such statements as some of these. They are laid down with all solemnity in Doolittle's body of divinity. There is a passage to much the same effect in one of South's Sermons.

"1. That the same person should be the Creator and yet a creature. Is not this wonderful?

"2. That the Father of eternity should be born in time. Is not this wonderful?

"3. That the Mighty God should be a weak babe. Is not this wonderful?

"4. That the virgin's womb should contain him, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain. Is not this wonderful?

"5. That he that had both father and mother, should have neither father nor mother. Is not this another thing in him very wonderful?

"6. That his Father should be greater than he, and yet he be his Father's equal. Is not this also wonderful?

"7. That he was before Abraham was born, and yet Abraham was born before him, about the space of two thousand years. Shall not this be accounted wonderful?

"8. That he was David's son, and yet David's Lord. Was not this such a wonder, that the great Rabbies among the Pharisees could not understand it?

"9. That the wisdom and word was an infant, that could not speak a word. Who with words can declare how great this wonder was?

"10. Who can reckon up the wonders in him? He was omnipotent, and yet weak; infinite, and yet finite; invisible, and yet was seen; immortal, and yet did die; he was a most spiritual being, and yet had flesh, and blood, and bones. That he was God, what more glorious? That he was flesh, what more inglorious? That he was God in flesh, what more marvellous?"

truth with something of its native vigour. Mr. Eddy's work is a guide for the scriptural inquirer. His faith he declares to have been "the result of diligent, prayerful, and laborious search after truth." He has the claim to be heard of one, who, when his earliest doubts occurred, "determined to satisfy his mind from the only correct source of information," and who was diligent and wary enough, before he suffered his judgment to be decided, to transcribe "every word from the beginning of Matthew to the end of Revelations, which appeared to bear on the question." Let those who dispute his conclusion, look at his reasons, and they who think lightly of his faith, imitate his zeal and caution in inquiry.

We like Mr. Eddy's little work, further, because it shows him in the light of what we account the most noble, elevated thing on earth, a man who will act undeviatingly on his responsibility to God, let what will cross his way. He doubted whether what he had believed religious truth were indeed such; it became his duty to examine. He examined, and his sentiments were changed. It became his duty to do nothing inconsistent with his recently acquired views of divine truth, and he refused to do any thing inconsistent with them. Here is the consequence.

"My opinions are represented by many as indicating a state of mind, altogether indifferent as to my future welfare, and even as betokening doubts of a future state of rewards and punishments; a state rendered *certain*, in the opinion of some of the best and most learned men, from the very light of nature, independent of all revelation. Brethren, can you believe that life, eternal life, has all at once become of no value to me? And that for no other reason than to be exposed to hatred, calumny and reproach, I have voluntarily departed from him who is the way, and the truth, and the life? Do you think that my mind has become callous to the solemnities of judgment and the joys of salvation? Can you believe that I have willingly, and without a cause, incurred the loss, not only of Christian fellowship, but private friendship? That I have at once become insensible to all that is most dear to man, either in time or eternity? You must either believe this, or you must do me the justice to acknowledge, that my opinions are the result of careful investigation, and avowed under a serious sense of duty, and a full persuasion of future responsibility."

On the meekness of this expostulation we cannot stay to remark. The independent uprightness which was the occasion of the charges is worthy of all praise. The spirit which prompted them is one of the paradoxes of what is esteemed by some the religious character. Difference of religious views is the only thing which is regarded as releasing men from the otherwise universal duty of a charitable judgment of each other. On that ground only, which is most sacred, the cruel passions, it

is thought, may war. In other cases the feelings are understood to give some warning to the conscience; but a zealot sanctifies his outrage by accounting it the victory of his duty over his weakness. If there is any thing which, more than all the rest, is sickening to a fair mind, and urges it to look to a better state of being, which may correct the inequalities of this, it is to see the treatment which an honest man receives for avowing a sentiment which conviction and a sense of duty will not let him conceal. No sooner is such an avowal made, than men of character and sensibility—responsible, respected, unspotted men—become the scoff of every conceited neighbour, who chances to be afflicted with a zeal beyond his knowledge. In such a contest all the usual supports, on which, in other cases, men who have earned them may lean, are unavailing or worse. Piety is called in question; profound and humble investigation termed the pride of reason and learning, and respectability but furnishes a theme for vulgar sarcasm. They who can urge no better recommendation to notice, can style themselves “the weak things of this world,” and think themselves appointed to confound what they denounce as “the things that are mighty.” To a discussion the most important and sometimes the most intricate, there is no man but thinks himself equal; and when general ideas fail, personalities are at hand; and that may be made up in positiveness and vehemence, which is wanting in argument.

We make no application of these remarks, except to say, that, to what they describe, the method of the author of these pages is a contrast. We have seen that he did not profess his novel sentiments with impunity, but he defends them without any appearance, not to say of uncharitableness, but even of irritation. We admire the temper which his little work exhibits. He appears in it a man of honourable and intrepid, but kind and considerate mind; ardently attached to protestant principles, and showing his respect for them by forbearing to encroach on them in others; jealous of any aggression on his right of private judgment, but too well taught in the school of Jesus to be willing to repel it at any sacrifice of the fruit of christian truth, the christian temper. If controversy were conducted only by such men, men who, having some delicacy themselves, knew how to respect others, it would no longer be such a dreadful thing. Truth might be sought at no cost of brotherly love, nay, by its exercise and culture; the tree be pruned without shaking from it a healthy blossom. We are not so blind to what is going on about us, as to expect to witness much of this. As yet, in most parts of our country, what

we hold for the sense of scripture is much in disrepute. We cannot expect, that they who profess it will not meet with discouragements like those of Mr. Eddy ; and we rejoice, that they have so fair an example of the manner in which, by a Christian, such discouragements should be encountered. For ourselves, we are taught to value our privileges. We live in a place (and while we sympathise with others, whose lot is less favoured, it is not lost on our gratitude) where difference is not danger nor estrangement ; where men know how to tolerate without acquiescing, and are willing to have our friendship, though they cannot go with us in our belief. Now and then we hear a railing accusation from without, but we are spared the trial of having enemies of our own household.

We wish this little work may have a wide circulation, for it can teach nothing either in doctrine or in temper, but what is worthy to be learned:

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

The Evangelical Missionary Society of Massachusetts.—

This society has for its object, to provide for the destitute inhabitants of our own country, the means of christian instruction and moral improvement. It has now existed for twelve years, and is increasing in importance and influence. Its mode of operation upon the people of our new settlements, especially the peculiar attention it gives to the education and improvement of the rising generation, has rendered essential service to the cause of religion, and been favored, under the blessing of a kind providence, to the advancement of knowledge, and piety, and happiness, and, we trust, to the salvation of many, who without its kind aid might have lived and died with little learning and still less religion. It is our intention at some future time to lay before our readers a more minute account of its origin, its plan, its operations and success. For the present we confine ourselves to the publication of the last annual report, from which some pleasing intelligence may be gathered.

The annual meeting was holden in Boston, the first day of October, 1818, when a discourse was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Bancroft. The following in the *Report of the Trustees.*—

In reviewing the origin, progress, and influence of the E. M. Society, the Trustees consider it an imperious duty, to invite

all who are friendly to its principles and measures, to unite in a thankful acknowledgment of the divine blessing on their labours. We cannot forget *that*, which, in comparison, was a "day of small things." It is to be ascribed to the Author of all good influences, that the Christians who originated our system of operations, were directed to a course, which, on fair and full experiment, has been found to conduce to the furtherance of the Gospel. Wise in their selection of missionaries, who had cultivated minds, who called "no man their master upon earth," who were free from sectarian views, and who had allotted them for cultivation particular portions of the vineyard;—they have seen under their nurturing care, the extension of the social spirit of Christianity, the advancement of useful knowledge and the triumphs of catholicism and piety.

The year which has elapsed, since the Society, under Legislative sanction, offered itself to the general patronage of the State,* may be hailed as an auspicious introduction to a more extended scene of service. It is a tribute due to our fellow Christians in Salem and its vicinity, that their kind reception and liberal contribution in aid of our general object, at the first semi-annual meeting, have strengthened our confidence in the rectitude and correctness of our measures, and given us fresh ardour in the application of our time and means to the promotion of the interests of our Redeemer.

Circumstances, which we deem it our duty to state, render the continuance of our charitable aid to the inhabitants of *Jackson*, in the District of Maine, indispensable. This is a new settlement; has a thinly scattered population, and are of themselves unable to support the ministry. They have evinced an ardent desire for "the bread of life;" have sent us expressions of their gratitude, whose sincerity we could not suspect; and are bringing forth in their life and conversation the fruits of charity and righteousness, which we trust will be to the glory and praise of God. Their minister, the Rev. Mr. Warren, has a scanty support, is a pattern of exemplary diligence and fidelity, has been unwearied in his solicitude for the improvement and virtue of the rising generation, and his labours have been blessed to the growth of the temporal and spiritual interest of that people. We have for these reasons granted towards his support the past year \$200.

Mr. Joshua Barrett has been three months in our employment in the towns of Belfast and Searsmont. An occasional in-

* Till this time it had been composed of members from only the counties of Worcester and Middlesex.

difference and lukewarmness may be considered the natural effect of living long without the stated administration of the word and ordinances. In our new settlements, another cause has unhappily aided in producing a spiritual lethargy. Itinerants, without knowledge or a respect for order, who have obtruded themselves as religious teachers, and whose exclusive aim has been to advance a sectarian interest, have for a time enkindled a spirit of unhallowed zeal and fanaticism. The men who had listened to them, being left to the exercise of sober reflection, have perceived the contrariety of their instructions and manners, to the dictates of more enlightened reason. They have turned with disgust from a course of operation, unfavourable in its influence on the temper and morals. From reiterated lessons, which are dictated by a sound mind and which are a fair representation of the "doctrine which is according to godliness," we may expect an animated attention to religious duties, and an ameliorated state of public sentiment and practice. The report of Mr. Barrett gives us consoling proof that his "labour has not been in vain."

The Trustees feel a desire to stand justified in the view of the Society, in reference to the measures they are taking for the comparatively flourishing town of Belfast. Our fellow-christians there were labouring under peculiar embarrassments, arising from diversity of opinion. A general disposition appeared to listen to sober and reasonable ideas of Christianity. A laudable effort was making, even beyond their ability, to build a house for the worship of God. A bright prospect was opening for the re-settlement of the ministry. Good reason exists for believing that our encouragement has aided the accomplishment of their desires. Their union has been advanced, their meeting house is nearly completed. Through the charity of the 2d church in Worcester, we have sent the brethren, who are few in number, furniture for their communion-table. That the seed already sown might not be suffered to perish, for want of culture, we have recently commissioned the Rev. Seth Stetson to preach to them three months. Our hopes are raised by their previous measures, that an united and prosperous church will soon exist, who will stand in no need of charity.

The town of Nobleborough in that vicinity, has commanded our commiseration, and is now receiving our assistance. The inhabitants of this corporation have set their face as a flint, against all teachers and measures, which should interrupt their union, or give countenance to an intolerant or fanatical spirit. A desire for knowledge, and a respect for Christian institutions,

have led them the past year to the extent of their means, to support Mr. David Reed, as an instructor of youth, and teacher of religion. Viewing with delight their state and prospects, receiving from them earnest solicitations for assistance, and being addressed in their behalf by their sympathizing neighbours, we have continued Mr. Reed among them at the expense of the Society three months.

In addition to these labourers, the Rev. Seth E. Winslow has been sent out by us, on a mission to Holton Plantation. Of his reception and prospects, we have had no opportunity for collecting information.

The Trustees congratulate their associates on the adoption of important measures in the District of Maine, to advance their benevolent design, and that a branch of this Society is this day employed in Portland in celebrating the anniversary of their establishment. We affectionately wish them a benediction from the Author of all good, and that prosperity may attend their well directed efforts for spreading the savour of the knowledge of Christ.

We are invited to encourage the Society from a consideration of the increased number of their friends; from the general approbation of their proceedings; from the liberal contributions to assist them in their works; from the recollection of their past usefulness, and that a number of Christian churches have been edified and built up, through their instrumentality, to continue their labours. We feel authorized in behalf of the Society, to give to the Christian community a renewed and solemn pledge, that the monies with which we shall be entrusted, shall be faithfully applied to the promotion of common and religious knowledge; that the men employed by us shall be alike distinguished for their learning, candour, and piety; that we will use every means in our power to keep a respect for human creeds and the words which man's wisdom teacheth, in subordination to a reverence for the sacred scriptures; that we will encourage regular christians of every sect, to friendly intercourse and communion, and, that at the return of each anniversary, we will make a faithful report of our measures. We ask all the friends of charity, and of pure and undefiled religion, to unite with us, in a devout supplication for a blessing on our desires and labours.

The following named gentlemen were chosen as officers for the ensuing year.

Hon. BENJAMIN PICKMAN, Jun. *Pres.*

Rev. EZRA RIPLEY, D. D. *V. Pres.*

Rev. SAMUEL RIPLEY, *Cor. and Rec. Sec'y.*
 Dea. JOSIAH BRIDGE, *Treasurer.*
 Rev. FRANCIS PARKMAN, *V. Treas.*
 ICHABOD TUCKER, *Esq. Assis. Treas. for Essex.*
Trustees.

Rev. Dr. Bancroft,	Hon. Joseph Allen,
Rev. Dr. Foster,	Dea. John White,
Rev. Asa Packard,	Dea. Moses Coolidge,
Rev. Dr. Thayer,	Stephen Higginson, Jun. Esq.
Rev. Isaac Allen,	John Richardson, Esq.
Rev. Charles Lowell,	Ichabod Tucker, Esq.

Standing Committee for receiving and appropriating monies, donations, &c. for foreign missions.

Rev. Dr. Foster,	Rev. Mr. Pierce,
Rev. Mr. Lowell,	Rev. Dr. Bancroft,
Prof. Sidney Willard,	Samuel Parkman, Esq.
Rev. Mr. Channing,	

Preachers for the next annual meeting.

Rev. Samuel Ripley, 1st. Rev. Abiel Abbot, 2d.

Massachusetts Peace Society.—The third anniversary of this society, in which the Christian Disciple must always take a strong interest, was celebrated on the 25th of December last. An excellent address was delivered in the evening by the Hon. Andrew Ritchie, to a large and attentive audience. The annual report was likewise read in public. The following extracts from it exhibit the flourishing state of the society, and the encouraging progress of pacific principles.

Since the 10th of December 1817, eight thousand two hundred and ninety-eight Tracts have been distributed in behalf of the society ; of which 4785 were copies of the various numbers of the *Friend of Peace*. The remaining 3513 were copies of the smaller Tracts—the *Solemn Review*, the *Sermon on War*, the last Annual Address and Reports, and copies of several Tracts from a Peace Society in London.

Besides the distributions which have been made in the United States, a considerable number of Tracts have been sent to four of the British Provinces in America—to London, Liverpool, and Manchester in England—to Glasgow and Dundee in Scotland, and to St. Petersburg, in Russia.

In addition to the distributions which have been made at the expense of the Society, many thousands of Peace Tracts have been sold or gratuitously distributed in different sections of the

United States ; and much evidence has occurred that these Tracts have been favourably received, and have produced considerable effects. They have not only excited attention to the objects of the Society, but have increased the number of its friends and its members. At the last anniversary this Society consisted of 304 members. It has since been increased to upwards of 550, including six auxiliary or branch societies, which have been formed in the course of the year.* The Society now extends by its members to nine of the United States, and two of the British provinces. Several new Peace Societies have been recently organized in different states. From information received, it appears that there are now in this country at least seventeen organized Peace Societies, including Auxiliaries ; and that several others are about forming, if not already formed. To these may be added a conference of the Methodist Reformed Church in the state of New York, which has assumed the character of a Peace Society, and a Society of Young Friends in Bucks county, in Pennsylvania, which has been formed for the purpose of distributing Peace Tracts. Respectful notice should also be taken of an individual mechanic in the state of New York, who has published, at his own expense, fourteen thousand copies of the *Friend of Peace*, and two thousand five hundred copies of the *Solemn Review of the Custom of War*. A man of such energy and benevolence may justly have his name enrolled with Peace Societies. What may not be done in this good cause when men of wealth and enterprize shall truly feel its importance !

In London there are two independent Peace Societies. The Society for Promoting Permanent and Universal Peace, has a considerable number of Auxiliaries in different parts of the kingdom ; it has published many thousands of Tracts—some of which have been translated into the German language. This will doubtless be followed by an extensive circulation on the continent of Europe. Several of the English periodical works favour the cause of peace—the *Philanthropist*, the *Eclectic Review*, the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Evangelical Magazine*, and the *Christian Observer*. In each of these, articles have appeared which must have excited much reflection, and multiplied the advocates for peace.

The Report then goes on to take a view of the obstacles to be encountered.

Among these are the following ;—the extensive influence of a mis-directed education,—the accumulated prejudices of seve-

* The Society has been enlarged since the Report was communicated.

ral thousand years,—the enormous expenditures which in every country are devoted to military objects,—the vast numbers of men who imagine that their interest or their fame must rise or fall with the popularity of war,—the many also, who suppose that they understand the subject sufficiently to decide, without the labour of investigation,—and the whole mass of human depravity. These all stand arrayed to obstruct the object of Peace Societies.

An answer is given to the objection, that *war is necessary from the very nature of man*, by an appeal to history, which shows us that many customs, once esteemed quite as necessary, have yet passed away. “Public opinion, custom, and habit, always create a kind of necessity in their own favour.”

At one period in the history of our ancestors, they were of the opinion that *human sacrifices* were acceptable to God, and the most efficacious means of appeasing his anger, and procuring his aid. While such was the prevailing sentiment, human sacrifices were as necessary “from the very nature of man,” as wars have been in this age. But as soon as public opinion was changed, the necessity of such sacrifices ceased to exist, and the custom was of course abolished. The same things may be affirmed of other barbarous customs, the histories of which are now read with astonishment mingled with horror.

Within less than 150 years, the learned Christians of Massachusetts regarded “liberty of conscience,” or “toleration,” as the first-born of all abominations; and were of the opinion that “to destroy the bodies of those wolves,” who propagate erroneous opinions, is not “frustrating the end of Christ’s coming, which was to save souls, but a direct advancing it.” While such was the popular sentiment, there was a necessity of hanging or burning men for their conscientious opinions,—and the best of men were as liable to suffer as the worst. But in our times, that liberty of conscience which our ancestors regarded with so much horror, is acknowledged in our civil constitutions, as one of the essential and unalienable rights of man. Of course, there is now no necessity of destroying “the bodies” of men on account of their religious opinions. Such scenes as were formerly witnessed in New-England, if now repeated, would fill the whole country with indignation and horror. A similar change in public sentiment, and in the constitutions and laws of the country, will render war, with all its bewildering splendour, an object of general abhorrence.

The 15th No. of *The Friend of Peace* is published, and contains the following additional facts relative to peace societies.

The New-York Peace Society has been lately re-organized and its concerns placed under the direction of a large Committee. The Annual meeting of the Society was held on the 25th of December; a valuable Report has been published, and the prospects of the society are flattering.

The Ohio Peace Society is also in a flourishing state; its numbers increasing and its exertions very considerable. This Society has republished eight numbers of the *Friend of Peace*, and has proposed to republish the remainder of the first volume.

Four respectable Auxiliaries have been added to the M.P.S.

Two new Peace Societies in the state of New-York have also been recently formed.

A proposed Constitution for a Vermont Peace Society has been published in the newspapers of that state.

The *Friend of Peace* has obtained a very extensive circulation. Nos. 1, 2, and 3, have already passed through *seven* editions, and the 7th edition of No. 4, is now in press. Several other numbers have passed through 5 or 6 editions, and the whole of the first volume has been reprinted.

Society for propagating the Gospel among the Indians and others in North America.—The anniversary of this Society was holden in November last, when the discourse was preached by Rev. President Kirkland. The annual report has but just been published. It presents a detail of the operations of the Society in the District of Maine, and among some of the Indian tribes. In the District of Maine it supported, during the last year, eleven missionaries in various places, from two to four months each, and granted to some places pecuniary assistance for schools and religious instruction. By the accounts received from their missionaries, there appears to be in various parts of that country, a deplorable want both of common and of religious instruction. Many instances like the following are given:—"Last fall," says Mr. Sawyer, who has been occupied at Williamsburg and the vicinity, "I visited a neighbourhood, where I found their sons and daughters, of the age of eighteen or twenty years, who could not read a word. I engaged a young woman, of good qualifications, to teach them three months. The first week she had twenty-one scholars; and only three of them could read the alphabet. A few miles distant, I visited a family of thirteen, parents and children; and neither parent nor child could read a sentence in the word of God; in the nearest house was a family of seven in the same lamentable ignorance." Mr. Douglas says, "he finds great reason to lament the neglect of early religious instruction.

Here are parents, surrounded with children, to whom even the first principles of religion have never been taught. He frequently examined the children before them, and, to their extreme mortification, found the children destitute of a knowledge of the existence of God." One girl of seventeen years old, could not even read. Mr. Parker informs us, "that at Pittston, East Parish, where there are about fifteen or twenty families, only one sermon has been preached since the settlement, fifteen years; that no missionary had ever before visited them, and that they were so poor as to be even neglected by the Methodists." From such specimens it is evident there is a great deal to be done in that part of our land; and the report of the society contains much gratifying information of what has been done successfully. Schools have been opened and maintained, and meetings for worship and preaching holden, which have undoubtedly been the means of great good.

With respect to the *Indians*, to whom a portion of the attention of this society is directed, their report gives some interesting intelligence. A school was opened for three months, among the Narragansetts, at Charlestown, Rhode Island, at which "the children, from twelve to twenty-four, appear to have made considerable improvement. A girl of about twelve years of age, says the Instructor, began in words of two syllables, and in the course of a week was in four syllables. She became well acquainted with the spelling book, and I advanced her to the Testament, and, at the close of the school, she could read in any part of the Testament with fluency and exactness. Numbers, who began in words of two syllables, read at the close with tolerable exactness." The Rev. T. Alden has performed a second mission of six weeks among the Seneca and Munsee tribes. He has given a particular account of some of his interviews with the natives, and of the topics on which he addressed them. They listened attentively, and answered him kindly. Their replies, in two instances, are given as follows:—

"Brother, we thank you for coming to see us. We thank the Great Spirit, that he has given you health and strength to come and talk to us about the works of God. We will thank the Great Spirit to preserve your health and to prosper you in going to the other villages of your red brethren.

"Brother, we have been told nearly the same things, which you have now told us, by men of different societies. We have considered them much. We fully understand every thing you have told us, and we shall take it into deeper consideration than we have ever done before.

“Brother, there is good and bad among us. Some are a long time in taking hold of the gospel. We hope all will one day take hold of it.

“Brother, we understand that you are going to Tonnewanta. Many chiefs are now assembled there in counsel; some of ours some from Buffalo, some from Alleghany, some from Genesee, some from Cayuga, some from Oneida; and they all met together upon the same business you are on. It will be a good time for you to go to Tonnewanta. We pray the Great Spirit to give you strength to talk to your red brethren at Tonnewanta. You could not have come and talked to us, if the Great Spirit had not given you strength.”

On the other occasion, “It was almost sunset when the exercises were over. Pollard made a short address. His first sentence, delivered with a solemn countenance, was interpreted in these words:—*We thank the Great Spirit, that we are brought so near to the close of another day in health and strength.*

“After the above expression of thanksgiving to Almighty God, Pollard, in the name of the chiefs, thanked me for coming again to talk to them about the Great Spirit and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He said they hoped that they should be enabled to remember what I had told them, and *with God’s merciful help* give great attention to it, and that I might have health and strength to return in safety to my home.”

Among the *Stockbridge Indians* there is a permanent missionary; and the account given of the state of things there, confirms the opinion we have always held, that substantial, permanent good to these poor savages, is to be principally hoped from permanent, resident, instructors. Under the labours of Mr. Sergeant, considerable moral and religious impression seems to have been made.

Mr. Sergeant visited the Oneida Indian village, where his children kept a Sunday school; and, though it was a rainy day, found, to his surprise, between thirty and forty children collected. This village of about twenty families, and upwards of fifty children, has been grossly neglected. “They generally understand and speak a little English, are very industrious, and have made considerable progress in civilization, but there is not one professor of religion among them.” They had been “much inclined to work or play on the Sabbath;” our missionary “observes with pleasure, that this Sunday school has put a stop to their profaning the Sabbath.”

The Indians appeared “so far engaged for a general reformation, that they agreed to form two societies; the men by

themselves, and the women by themselves; for the promotion of temperance, morality, industry, and the arts of civilized life." On the first day of the year (1813,) instead of the intemperate and revelling practices which had been customary for many years past, there was a meeting for prayer and reading the Word of God.

The present state of this mission is, on the whole, apparently encouraging; and we may unite our hopes with our prayers, "that a remnant," at least, of this forlorn people, "may be saved."

Reform in English Prisons.—Hardly any thing in the way of active benevolence has taken place in this active age, so interesting as the exertions of a few women in London to civilize and render comfortable the prisoners in Newgate. This prison has of late years been crowded with double the number of prisoners it was constructed to hold; and the abuses which existed there, the uncleanness, the indecency, the riot, intemperance, gambling and quarrelling, were horrible to think of. The women's apartments were universally allowed to be the worst; so bad indeed, that those, who knew most about it, declared that reformation was absolutely impracticable. Nevertheless, in spite of all discouragement, Mrs. Fry, one of the society of Friends, visited the place, and accomplished a work of benevolence which has astonished all England; the history of which is one of the most wonderful and affecting in all the annals of charity, or of the world. Her first visit to the prison was in 1813. She found there nearly 300 women, crowded together, sometimes 120 in one ward; they slept on the floor without any bedding, and many without clothing; they were openly drinking spirits, and swearing with shocking imprecations; every thing filthy to excess. She read to them from the Bible, and was convinced that something might be done for them. Circumstances prevented her visiting them again, until December 1816. She then found all the women playing at cards, or reading improper books, or begging at the gratings, or fighting for the money thus acquired, or engaged in the mysteries of fortune-telling. The children of these women, about seventy in number, were there with them; and Mrs. Fry's first object was to open a school for them, which she did, notwithstanding many discouragements, and constant assurances that her efforts would be utterly fruitless. The good effect was immediate; the most abandoned of the mothers thanked her with tears; and the younger of the women crowded

about her with earnest entreaties, that they too might be taught and employed. In consequence of this, Mrs. Fry and the young lady who assisted her, projected a school for the women also, at which they might be taught to read and be furnished with work. This proposition was apparently so romantic, that it was with the greatest difficulty they succeeded; at length however the thing was done, and twelve ladies joined with them, devoted themselves to the prison, one being constantly there to direct and oversee the women, actually living with them, and the others being constant visitors. Strict rules were established, by which the prisoners were bound to give up all their darling vices: drinking, gaming, card-playing, and novel reading, were absolutely forbidden; and to these rules, many of them voluntarily promised obedience. At the close of a month, the prison was visited by the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen, who were perfectly amazed at the change they witnessed. Riot, licentiousness, and filth, they found exchanged for sobriety, order, and comparative neatness, in the chamber, the apparel, and the persons of the prisoners. This hell upon earth, as it had been called, exhibited the appearance of an industrious manufactory, or a well regulated family. The magistrates, to declare their satisfaction, immediately adopted the whole plan as part of the system of Newgate, and loaded the ladies with thanks and benedictions. The change indeed was universal. In proof of which it is added, they who were marched off for transportation, instead of going away as usual, drunken, riotous, and breaking the windows and furniture, took a serious and tender leave of their companions, and expressed the utmost gratitude to their benefactors, from whom they parted with tears. Stealing also has been suppressed; and while upwards of 20,000 articles of dress have been manufactured, not one has been lost or purloined.

It would be difficult to find an enterprize more worthy of admiration than this. Our limits would not permit a more minute detail. We hope, that in our attempt to abridge, we have not made the account the less interesting.

Virginia University.—A University has been established by the state of Virginia, upon a plan drafted, it is understood, by Mr. Jefferson. There are to be ten professors, for the purposes of instruction in the various branches of literature and science; but no provision is made for the teaching of theology. The reason given is, that the constitution forbids the giving any ascendancy or preference to any one sect above another; and, as a professor of divinity must be of some one sect, it would be unconstitutional to appoint one. This is the ground

upon which they excuse themselves from appointing chaplains in their legislature. After assigning this reason, the commissioners say, "a proof of the being of a God, the creator, preserver, and supreme ruler of the universe, the Author of all the relations of morality, and of the laws and obligations these infer, will be within the province of the professor of ethics; to which adding the developments of these moral obligations, of those in which all sects agree, with a knowledge of the languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, a basis will be formed common to all sects." Providing thus far without offence to the constitution, we have thought it proper at this point to leave every sect to provide, as they think fittest, the means of further instruction in their own peculiar tenets." It would seem, however, that even the first principles of religion would be but scantily taught in this way, since the professor of Ethics is to be professor also of ideology, general grammar, rhetoric, belles letters, and the fine arts.

Declaration of the Allied Sovereigns, on the breaking up of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle.—Now that the pacification of Europe is accomplished, by the resolution of withdrawing the foreign troops from the French territory; and now that there is an end of those measures of precaution which deplorable events had rendered necessary, the Ministers and Plenipotentiaries of their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the King of France, the King of Great Britain, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of all the Russias, have received orders from their Sovereigns to make known to all the Courts of Europe, the results of their meeting at Aix-la-Chapelle, and with that view do publish the following Declaration:

The Convention of the 9th of October, which definitively regulated the execution of the engagements agreed to in the Treaty of Peace, of November 20, 1815, is considered by the Sovereigns who concurred therein, as the accomplishment of the work of peace, and of the completion of the political system destined to insure its solidity.

The intimate union established among the monarchs, who are joint parties to this system, by their own principles, no less than by the interests of their people, offers to Europe the most sacred pledge of its future tranquility.

The object of this union is as simple as it is great and salutary. It does not tend to any new political combination—to any change in the relations sanctioned by existing treaties. Calm and consistent in its proceedings, it has no other object than the maintenance of peace, and the security of those transactions on which the peace was founded and consolidated.

The Sovereigns, in forming this august union, have regarded as its fundamental basis, their invariable resolution, never to depart, either among themselves or in their relations with other States, from the strictest observation of the principles of the right of nations; principles which, in their application to a state of permanent peace, can alone effectually guarantee the independence of each government and the stability of the general association.

Faithful to these principles, the Sovereigns will maintain them equally in those meetings at which they may be personally present, or in those which shall take place among their ministers; whether it shall be their object to discuss in common their own interests, or whether they take cognizance of questions in which other governments shall formally claim their interference. The same spirit which will direct their councils, and reign in their diplomatic communications, shall preside also at these meetings; and the repose of the world shall be constantly their motive and their end.

It is with such sentiments that the Sovereigns have consummated the work to which they were called. They will not cease to labour for its confirmation and perfection. They solemnly acknowledge, that their duties towards God and the people whom they govern, make it peremptory on them to give to the world, as far as in their power, an example of justice, of concord, of moderation: happy in the power of consecrating, from henceforth, all their efforts to the protection of the arts of peace, to the increase of the internal prosperity of their States, and to the awakening of those sentiments of religion and morality, whose empire has been but too much enfeebled by the misfortune of the times.

METTERNICH,	WELLINGTON,	NESSELRODE,
RICHELIEU,	HARDENBERG,	CAPO D'ISTRIA.
CASTLEREAGH,	BERNSTORFF,	

Aix-la-Chapelle, Nov. 15, 1818.

The important question respecting Dartmouth College, has been decided in the Supreme Court of the United States, in favour of the old trustees, and unfavourably to the *University*.

The New Brick Church in Charlestown, lately erected by the Second Congregational Society in that place, was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God, on the 10th day of February.

The Calcutta papers mention the establishment, under flattering auspices, of a College at Serampore, for the instruction of Asiatic Christians and other youth in Oriental and European literature.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

FOREIGN.

A volume of Sermons, by Dr. Chalmers, of Glasgow.

A volume of Sermons, by Rev. R. C. Maturin.

Introduction to the study and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, by Thomas Hartwell Horne, A. M. 3 vols. 8vo. Illustrated by maps and fac similes of Biblical manuscripts.

The Principles of Christian Evidence illustrated, by an examination of arguments subversive of Natural Theology and the Internal Evidence of Christianity, advanced by Dr. T. Chalmers, in his "Evidence and Authority of the Christian Revelation." By Duncan Mearns, D. D. Professor of Theology, Aberdeen.

Improved edition of Schmidius' Concordance to the Greek New Testament. From the Glasgow University press, 2 vols. 8vo.

Memoirs of the Life of John Wesley, by Robert Southey, 2 vols.

Mrs. H. More's "Coelebs," has been translated into French and German.

A weekly Journal has commenced printing in Sierra Leone.

DOMESTIC.

The publication of President Dwight's Theology is completed, in 5 vols. 8vo. New Haven.

Sermons on Practical Subjects, by William Barlass. New York.

A Textuary, or Guide to Preachers in the selection of texts. Upon an entirely new plan. By T. M. Harris, D. D. Cambridge.

Essays on the distinguishing traits of Christian Character. By Gardiner Spring, A. M. Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the city of New York. Boston, 2d edition.

Family Lectures. By Mrs. N. Sproat. Boston.

Hints towards an Essay on the Pursuit of Happiness, by Benjamin L. Oliver, Jr. Cambridge.

A Discourse delivered before the New Jerusalem Church in Boston, on Christmas Day, 1818. Cambridge.

¶ The unexpected length of some articles in the present number, has rendered it necessary, in order to retain the Intelligence, to exceed the prescribed number of pages. This excess will occasion a corresponding deficiency in some future number.

THE
CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 70.

NEW SERIES—No. 2.

For March and April, 1819.

WHAT ARE THE GROUNDS OF ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD ?

IT is of vast importance to the right conduct of life and to the security of our immortal interests, that we form just conceptions of the nature of religion, and particularly of the grounds of acceptance with God. This is not to be numbered among the speculative themes, on which men may safely differ. It enters essentially into practice, and an error respecting it may be fatal. Yet, important as it is, perhaps there is none, on which there is a greater tendency to self-deceit, or a more active propensity to substitute something of our own for the unerring word of God. Notwithstanding the explicit declarations of scripture, which they admit indeed to be the truth, it is extremely difficult to persuade men, that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord;” that sin in all its nature and influence is odious in the sight of Heaven, and unrepented and unforsaken will inevitably be punished. No less difficult is it to impress men with the conviction of the indispensable and indissoluble connexion of religion with morality ; that it is not a profession, not a transport, or a prayer, but the prevailing habit of the soul, proved by the fruits of virtue ; by a pure, humble, and useful life : that piety especially does not consist in crying “ Lord, save us, or we perish ”—going to God, in the time of danger, when we have no other refuge ; but repairing to him daily, in our safety and amidst our blessings, so that when danger presses, or sorrow, or death invades, devotion may not be a novelty,

we may not be found strangers at the mercy-seat, or compelled to cry out in ignorance and alarm, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Yet, various and unequivocal as are the instructions of the gospel, accordant as they are with the best conceptions we can form of the character of God, and the nature of men and virtue, it is astonishing to what extent this subject has been misunderstood and perverted in some systems of theology, and in the crude notions of multitudes, who still profess to follow Jesus Christ for their guide. What now, let us inquire, are his words? "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees," that is, unless it be something better than the profession, or the outward garb of holiness, "ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." What is the character, to which this blessedness is promised? "Whoso doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven." "For, the hour cometh, when all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they *that have done good* to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." His apostles uniformly speak the same language. "In every nation," saith Peter, "he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of him." "To them, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour and immortality, eternal life; but to them, who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, tribulation and wrath, indignation and anguish, upon every soul of man, that doeth evil."

Indeed we must extract a large portion of the old and new Testaments, should we adduce only the plainest passages which teach, that the way of acceptance with God is an holy life; that our future condition will depend upon present character; in other words, that "God will render to every man according to his deeds;" that though after we have done all, we are but unprofitable servants, and our goodness cannot extend to him, yet through his mercy in Jesus Christ it shall be accepted; that, on the other hand, though our sins cannot hurt the impassible God, they are displeasing in his sight, and that the equity of his government, the sanctity of his laws, and especially the moral good of his universe, demand, that they should receive a punishment proportioned to their extent; from which nothing in the whole course of divine providence or grace, in the compassion of God or the mediation of Christ shall save the sinner, but only deep and humble penitence, approving its sincerity to the searcher of hearts in the future obedience of the life.

This treatment of mankind according to their characters; according to their improvement or abuse of gifts and opportuni-

ties, their obedience or violation of God's commands, unequivocally declared, seems perfectly compatible with the noblest views we can form of the divine character; with the discipline we should expect, as most suited to rational and accountable creatures, and as exerting by its sanctions, its promises and threatenings, the most salutary influence on the peace and virtue of the world. Yet reasonable as it is, and plainly as it is taught, there are not a few, who cherish other grounds of hope, and it is to be feared, encourage themselves "in sin, that grace may abound."

There are particularly two sentiments, contradictory indeed to each other, but equally opposed to the truth, and leading, it is believed, to the same pernicious and corrupting results: the one, grounded on mistaken views of the mercy of God in his Son, supposes that all men shall be saved without distinction of good or bad, and with no other punishment than they may suffer in the present life, having their sins freely pardoned through the mediation of Christ; the other, drawn from equally false conceptions of the divine grace in converting the most abandoned sinner, builds the hope of salvation on something wholly independent of ourselves, and granted only to God's elect, according to his uncontrollable and inexplicable sovereignty.

The danger of sentiments like these is great, both to the individuals who adopt them, and to the community in which they prevail. It is great, as might be expected, in exact proportion to their departure from the unerring standard of inspired truth. Whenever a man has learnt to persuade himself that he can attain eternal happiness on any other conditions than obedience, he has lost the strongest security to his virtue, and society their strongest security that he will not be a pestilent member. If he can believe, that through the mercy of God and the all-embracing mediation of Christ, his soul shall be safe, whatever sins he may have committed in the body; or that, though God hateth sin, he selects the most abandoned sinners as the monuments of his free regenerating grace; on either of these grounds, his moral purity is in danger. For even should he admit, and with such believers it is sometimes triumphantly declared, as granting to them a more exclusive privilege,—that "strait is the gate and few there be that are saved," yet such is the presumption, and did it not seem a solecism in terms, such is the spiritual pride of many self-deceived offenders, that they would fain persuade themselves, that they are of the chosen few; and that having no righteousness of their own, (which indeed may be literally true,

and which they seem to value as an essential qualification) they will be clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ, and share the triumphs of the great salvation.

But we have not so learned Christ; nor dare we rest our hopes on a baseless fabric. Such sentiments, we regard as among the perversions of pure christianity, most injurious in all their influence upon public and private morals; and, we believe that whoever with such a faith shall violate God's law, will find to his anguish the falseness of his dependance, and in the solemn revelations of eternity will mourn, when it is too late, his departure from the way, the truth, and the life.

With regard to the first error, to which we have reference, it might be sufficient to urge, that the doctrine of future punishments as well as of rewards, of misery to the wicked as well as of happiness to the good, is forced upon the mind by every part of the character and government of God, and by the course of his unequal providence in the world, as seen in the punishment and blessing of the good and in the apparent prosperity of the wicked. Much indeed may be urged, and justly, of the present sufferings of sin; of the pangs of conscience, of the degradation and contempt, and other temporal disadvantages, to which it subjects men. Much may be urged, and justly, of the influence of conscious guilt in spoiling our best enjoyments; spreading a dark cloud over every object, and taking from the sinner the comfort of even his innocent pleasures. Who will question, that in a most important sense, "there is no peace to the wicked"—no pleasure, in what fraud, or violence, or hypocrisy may procure? But this is far from reaching the extent of their demerits. Upbraiding conscience is silenced by the clamour of passion, and hardened by the habit of transgression. The vast proportion of habitual sinners do not reflect, and therefore do not suffer the pangs of compunction. It belongs to their unhappy character, that they proceed from worse to worse, and soon learn to give themselves up to commit all iniquity with greediness. The sentiment therefore, that their sin is adequately punished by its own miserable reflections in the present world, supposes a tenderness of conscience, an acuteness of moral sensibility, which the sinner does not possess; a kind of punishment, of which habitual transgression has rendered him utterly unsusceptible.

It may still further be urged against this sentiment, that it involves a very partial and inadequate view of the moral government of God; that it makes a very slight distinction between the virtuous and the wicked, while it leaves vice without its most solemn and effectual restraint. For what forbids our ap-

plying to a punishment that is to terminate with the present life, the same reflections, which we employ for our consolations under the afflictions of the world? Poignant as they are, they cannot be of great importance in themselves, for they cannot continue long. We are accustomed to say to suffering virtue; "only be patient for a season, and death shall bring thee thy crown." And with the same justice might the sinner sustain himself under the pressure of guilt; "my punishment will end with life, and after death I shall find the salvation of my soul, and share in the inheritance of heaven, as though I had never sinned."

We will not attempt to urge all the arguments which may be offered against this opinion,—we only add further, that it is absolutely opposed to the whole tenour of scripture. There is not a single text, that can fairly be adduced in its support, and pious industry would find it difficult to collect the passages, which without a figure, by various and energetic expressions, peremptorily and unequivocally assert the contrary. The glorious doctrine of the immortality of the soul is scarcely more frequently or more clearly exhibited. And we cannot but wonder and lament that any should so far pervert the oracles of God, as to persuade men to believe, that there is no punishment hereafter; an error, we repeat, most dangerous to the interests of society; for it breaks down the barriers of conscience, and removes those salutary restraints, without which, neither virtue, nor reputation, nor property are secure.

Again; in opposition to another fallacious hope, which is sometimes unguardedly inculcated and most dangerously cherished; let not the impenitent expect his present peace or future acceptance from any sudden preternatural influences of divine grace, imparted in the hour of peril, on the bed of sickness, and least of all in the immediate prospect of death. Let him be assured, as from the truth of God, that all the reliance he can build on such a foundation must prove delusive: for it is a presumptuous hope of what neither the wisdom nor the compassion of God will grant. Not that we limit the grace of God. But what is meant by the grace of God? Is it not the influence of his pure spirit upon the mind and heart to enlighten darkness, to strengthen weakness, and to help us to will and to do of his good pleasure? But it is granted, not arbitrarily and in uncertain measures, but by established laws, in accordance with natural light, in co-operation with known principles of our nature, maintained as well as appointed by the Lord of nature. It is granted, not in the way of sin, or even of mere expectation, but in the course of active duty; not to supersede our efforts and leave us to indolence, but in answer to prayer and in dili-

gent use of opportunity, to aid and quicken us. Because we find in the history of the apostles, that St. Paul was suddenly converted on his way to Damascus, and from a persecutor became the most zealous and successful minister of Christ, some are presumptuous enough to imagine, that the like signal interposition may be wrought for them. They do not reflect, that here was a miraculous appearance of Jesus Christ himself to one, chosen from the whole world to be, not an humble private christian, but the apostle of the Gentiles, to proclaim the message of salvation to the whole earth; the instrument under God by his preaching and his writings of leading many, even unborn and unnumbered generations, to glory. They do not reflect, that the power, which converted him, was the same miraculous agency, that restored sight to the blind, health to the sick, and life to the dead; that it was exerted at a period, when miracles were in the due order and course of divine providence for the first establishment of the christian faith; when such interpositions were needed, and therefore bestowed. But now, when miracles have ceased, and the great objects for which they were designed are accomplished, in the wide extension and the glorious triumphs of christian faith, can any indulge the hope, that the usual course of God's moral government is to be interrupted for their sakes? After in his bounteous mercy he has set before us all the means and encouragements, that can possibly be addressed to rational and accountable creatures, can they expect that any agency will be exerted for them, contrary to that wise and salutary course, of all others best adapted to its end, "ordered in all things and sure?" It is sufficient, that the grace of God is promised freely to all who ask it and will improve it, in measures and methods suited to our moral exigencies, and to our character as free and accountable agents. Holiness or virtue from its very nature cannot be forced upon us. It must be our voluntary choice, for otherwise there is no virtue. It must be the growth of time, and can be proved to be real only by trial; by the resistance of evil, and by the abundant fruits of righteousness. The providence of God, it is never to be forgotten, is continually acting for us in the ordinary events of life, setting before us striking events, exciting us to reflection alike by blessings and by chastisement, teaching us solemnly our frailty, our exposure to death, and the vanity of the fairest earthly prospects. Thus it is designed to admonish, to quicken, and to purify. To this great end it is acting every day for even the most abandoned sinner. To him, no less than to the obedient and faithful, the word of God addresses its rebukes, its threat-

enings, its encouragements. And the same God, the author of his moral nature, has given him eyes to see, and ears to hear, and understanding to discern, and is ever ready by the influences of his pure spirit to assist his humblest effort. But if the sinner long persist in hardening himself against those calls of Providence, those admonitions of the divine word, those suggestions of divine grace,—in the just judgments of heaven, that eye shall be darkened, that he cannot see; that ear shall be closed that he cannot hear; and the soul that has so long been proof against the offers of mercy, the tenderest solicitations of paternal love, shall suffer without remedy. Indeed such is the confirmed hardness of some, who have been favored with the choicest means of religion, that they may be considered as having sealed their doom before they leave the world: their term of probation has closed before their term of life; and God, who has witnessed all their hardness and insensibility amidst his reproofs, has given them over to a reprobate mind. Tremendous is the condition of him, of whom Jehovah has said, as of his impenitent and unfaithful people, “Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone.”

It would however be a gross abuse of this general sentiment, to make the application of it of ourselves, to any particular individuals. The general rule is established in the word of God for our warning and exhortation; but judgment belongs to God. He alone knows our situation and character, the good that is mingled with our evil, and the evil, that is mingled with our good. As long as life remains, duty must be performed, whether it be of penitence or praise. The most profligate and abandoned sinner is exhorted to repent, and the command loses nothing of its obligation, because he is on the verge of eternity. Life is the appointed day of grace, and its last moments must not be wasted in despair, because its best strength and opportunities have been abused in sin. Whether a death bed penitence can in any case be accepted, is not for man to declare, for it is not among the promises of God. But of this we may be assured, that to live in sin, with the hope that it will hereafter be forgiven, is presuming against the whole tenour of God's moral government and the most explicit declarations of his word. It is to suppose what is utterly groundless, because it contradicts every just idea of the nature of sin or holiness, that the character can be changed at once; that a few days or hours of weakness and fear, amidst the pains of sickness and in the near prospect of eternity, when religion is our only refuge, and we are penitent by necessity, may blot out the remembrance of a corrupt life: it is to suppose that

God, who sees the end from the beginning, and surveys at one glance the whole of our past probation, as well as the fleeting present, attaches more importance to the day of our death, and to the feeble services we can render amidst languishing nature and appalling fears, than to the whole tenour of our lives, when we had the will and opportunities of free agents. In fine, it is to cherish a most unchristian, and therefore unreasonable hope, which offends against the dictates alike of natural and of revealed truth, and which will be put to shame amidst the solemnities of a final retribution.



FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

ON ROMANS ix. 3.

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

This clause has been considered of peculiar difficulty ; but this difficulty, I am convinced, would never have appeared, had the import of the original been exactly followed. It arises from two circumstances ; one, that the verb *νυχοῦν*, translated in the common version, *I could wish*, is rendered in a wrong mode and tense ; and the other, that the words in this clause are, as I conceive, improperly connected together, the first half of it being, as I think, a parenthesis, and the last half being connected in sense, not with this parenthesis, but with the words which precede it in verse 2. Thus ; "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." This, which seems to me the true interpretation, has been pointed out by Gilbert Wakefield, a name dear to every advocate of civil and religious freedom.

But before proceeding further in illustrating this exposition, I will quote what is said respecting the passage by Doctor Doddridge.

Dr. Doddridge, interwoven with his paraphrase, gives a translation in the words which he has printed in italics, as follows ;

For methinks, if I may be allowed to express myself so, I could even wish that as Christ subjected himself to the curse, that he might deliver us from it, so I myself likewise, were made an anathema, after the example of Christ ; like him exposed to all the execrations of an enraged people, and even to the infamous and accursed death of crucifixion itself, for the sake of my brethren and kinsmen, according to the flesh ;

that they might thereby be delivered from the guilt they have brought upon their own heads, and become entitled to the forfeited and rejected blessings of the Messiah's kingdom: so cordial and disinterested a regard have I for my dear nation."

In a note the Doctor observes, that he adopted this manner of translating the passage from Dr. Waterland. "Next to this," he continues, "I should incline to the interpretation given by Dr. Clarke, who supposes the apostle means, that he could be content that Christ should give him up to such calamities as those, to which the *Jewish people* were doomed for rejecting him; so that if they could all be centered in one person, he could be willing they should unite in him, could he thereby be a means of saving his countrymen. Compare Deut. vii. 26; Josh. vi. 17. and vii. 12.—Grotius understood it of a separation from the *Church of Christ*, (which is sometimes called by the name of Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12; Gal. iii. 27.) or of *excommunication*. Elsner shows very well, as many other commentators have done, how very absurd it would be to suppose he meant, that he could be content to be delivered over to everlasting misery for the good of others."

There are some classes of christians who will not thank the Doctor for his last observation, regarding as they do this kind of disinterested benevolence, as the true test of the christian character.

To return then to the explanation which I have before suggested, I conceive that the first part of the passage under consideration, contains an accidental thought, a parenthesis, such as is not unfrequent in the writings of the glowing and full-minded apostle. The verb translated *could wish*, may mean and does here, I conceive, mean *boasted, gloried in, or professed*. The passage in connexion with what precedes may be thus rendered.

I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart, (for I myself once gloried in being separate from Christ) for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

The following version of the whole period exhibits the combined efforts of several distinguished men :

"I say the truth in Christ, I speak not falsely, my conscience bearing me joint witness in the holy spirit, that I have great sorrow and continued grief in my heart, (for I also was once an alien from Christ *) for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the

* Bandinel translates "I boasted that I was an alien."

law, and the service of the temple and the promises ; whose are the fathers, and of whom, by natural descent, Christ came. God, who is over all, be blessed forever."

Wakefield justifies this version of the parenthesis by the use of a similar phrase in Homer. "It gives an obvious and a beautiful sense, similar to a sentiment advanced by the apostle upon another occasion, Gal. iv. 12. "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am ; for I also *was as ye are.*"

On the subject of this text I will quote a passage from a sermon of the Rev. Peter Eaton of Boxford—distinguished for good sense and chaste composition—as in many respects the opinions which he expresses coincide with my own.

"The doctrine of submission has been carried to a singular length by modern theorists. They have considered it as requiring in us a willingness to be forever separated from God and all good, if it may be for his glory. This is made the test of the christian temper. If you are willing to be miserable forever, that God may be glorified, you have christian submission ; if you have not been formed to this temper of mind, you are yet a stranger to the power of religion. This sentiment is maintained, as a requisite for future happiness.

"In support of the sentiment two passages of scripture, more especially, have been adduced. One is from the writings of Moses, when he was interceding for his countrymen the Hebrews. *Yet now if thou wilt, forgive their sin, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, which thou hast written.* By this book is understood by some the book of eternal life. Does not the passage admit an easy and natural solution, if we consider him as speaking of his natural life ? This then is the plain import of his language. 'If so heinous their offence, that thou must, O God, withdraw thyself from them, I wish no longer to be their guide ! If so aggravated their crime, as to preclude their pardon, permit me not to live to witness their overthrow and utter destruction ; or if their pardon can be purchased by my life, I freely resign it up.' We consider this a noble expression of patriotism, which does great honour to the Hebrew law-giver.

"The other passage is from the writings of St. Paul. *I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.* Various opinions have been expressed on this text, and recourse had to different methods to solve the difficulty. A certain ingenious writer has remarked, that the expression, 'I wish myself accursed, or separated from Christ,' is an incidental thought, naturally suggested by his subject, and ought to be included in a parenthesis. Then the connected reading will be, 'I have great heavi-

ness and continual sorrow of heart for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.' When he speaks of wishing himself separated from Christ, he alludes to his former state of unbelief, when he was an opposer of Christ; when separated, and he gloried in that separation from him. A willingness to be forever separated from God is rather an evidence of a positively wicked, than of a good temper of mind. For what is the employment of the miserable beings, who are separated from God? Is it not profaning the name of that Being, who has doomed them to sorrow? If then willing to dwell with the forlorn inhabitants of darkness, this implies a willingness to unite in their employ, which is a certain proof of a wicked temper of heart. Besides the very supposition is inconsistent. Was not this the expressive language of David, *Whom have I in heaven, but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Is it possible with this temper of mind, he should be willing to be forever separated from this most beloved and estimable object? The supposition is absurd. It is certainly more reasonable to believe a wicked man should be willing to be separated from God, than the good man, who loves him with all his heart." A.

REASONING OF BISHOP BEVERIDGE.

"I believe, that as there is one God, so this one God is three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"This I confess, is a *mystery* which I cannot possibly *conceive*, yet it is a *truth* which I can easily *believe*; yea, *therefore* it is so *true* that I can easily *believe* it, because it is so *high* that I cannot possibly *conceive* it; for it is impossible any thing should be true of the infinite Creator which can be fully expressed to the capacities of a finite creature: and, for this reason, I ever did and ever shall look upon those 'apprehensions of God to be the *truest*, whereby we apprehend him to be the most *incomprehensible*; and that to be the *most true* of God, which seems most impossible unto us."

Private Thoughts, Part I. p. 29.

The author of this remarkable passage was a dignitary of the episcopal church of England, renowned for his talents and his piety. We are not disposed to question either his piety or his talents, but the principles on which he justified his belief in the mysterious doctrine are, we think, incorrect and of dangerous tendency. To evince the fallacy of those principles, let them be applied to other mysterious propositions. Suppose

another bishop should publish the following creed : I believe, that in the Lord's supper the bread is changed into the real body of Christ. I believe that God is both divisible and indivisible ; that he is the greatest and the least of all intelligencies ; that he fills heaven and earth and yet exists no where ; that he sees and knows all things, and yet is destitute of knowledge ; that he is absolutely good, and yet destitute of all goodness.

But expecting that others would object to these doctrines as self-contradictory, this bishop justifies his belief in each of them in the following manner :

"This I confess, is a *mystery* which I cannot possibly *conceive*, yet it is a *truth* which I can easily *believe*; yea, therefore it is so *true* that I can easily *believe* it, because it is so *high* that I cannot possibly *conceive* it ; for it is impossible any thing should be true of the infinite *Creator* which can be fully expressed to the capacities of a finite creature : and for this reason, I ever did and ever shall look upon those apprehensions of God to be the *truest*, whereby we apprehend him to be the most *incomprehensible* ; and that to be the *most true* of God, which seems most impossible unto us."

Now admitting this bishop to be both pious and learned, should we not be compelled to believe that his understanding had been greatly bewildered by the prejudices of education ? But to such prejudices all men are liable. How wide then the range for the exercise of candour. By the following extract from the same bishop Beveridge we shall, however, see the consequences of admitting a mysterious doctrine, as an essential article of faith.

"Hence also it was, that all persons to be baptized were always required, either with their own mouths, if adult, or if infants, by their sureties, to make a public confession of their faith in *Three Persons*, into whose names they were to be baptized : For this indeed was always looked upon as the sum and substance of the christian religion, to believe in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost ; and they who believed in these *Three Persons* were still looked upon as christians, and they who did not were esteemed infidels or heretics." Part II. p. 43.

This paragraph opens the way for many remarks ; we shall however, confine ourselves to a few.

1st. What the bishop says was "always required" of persons "to be baptised," is we think without any foundation in all that is recorded of the practice of the Apostles.

2nd. We do not admit that a belief in the doctrine in question "was *always* looked upon as the *sum and substance* of

the christian religion." For there was a time when this doctrine was not known in the christian church; and there have doubtless been many pious christians, that regarded the doctrine as an important article of faith, who were still far from supposing that a belief in it was "the sum and substance of the christian religion." Yet we cannot deny that many professed christians have given too much evidence that, in their view, a belief in this article is the one thing needful, and of far greater importance than conformity of temper to the moral precepts and the example of the Messiah. Hence we may account for much of the unchristian treatment which those have received who have dissented from the doctrine, and yet have made it their care to be followers of Christ and to obey his commands.

3d. If a belief in the mysterious doctrine is "the sum and substance of the christian religion" will it not follow, that Christ's sermon on the mount had no respect to the "sum and substance" of christianity? and that he was under a mistake in the conclusion of his discourse, in likening him, who "heareth and doeth" the sayings, or commands which he had delivered, to the "man who built his house upon a rock?" For he had not, that we can discern, the least reference to the doctrine of three persons in one God in any part of his sermon.

4th. According to the bishop's account, "the sum and substance of the christian religion" consists in the belief of a doctrine, the meaning of which he could not "possibly conceive." Can it then be wonderful that in past ages the hateful passions of persecution and war, have been deemed consistent with christianity? How different would have been the effects, had conformity of heart and practice to the temper exemplified by the Saviour been duly regarded as "the sum and substance of the christian religion!"

If any of our readers should say that the articles of faith which we have supposed to be asserted by another bishop, are more inconceivable or more repugnant to reason, than the one which occasioned these remarks, they are desired to remember, that, according to bishop Beveridge, this very circumstance is to be regarded as evidence of the *truth* of those articles. For on his hypothesis, we are to regard "that as most *true* of God, which seems most impossible unto us." Therefore, if it 'seems more impossible unto us' 'that God is the greatest and the least of all intelligencies,' than that he is three distinct persons, then the former of these must be regarded as "most *true* of God," or the reasoning of the bishop is fallacious and dangerous.

We have seen what opinions some christians have maintained. May God in his mercy hasten the time, when it shall be

more generally understood that a belief in doctrines, the meaning of which we "cannot possibly conceive" is not "the sum and substance of the Christian religion."

A GLANCE AT THE HISTORY OF OPINIONS CONCERNING THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN.

No. I.

In tracing back the history of religious doctrines, we have a much higher object in view than the mere indulgence of curiosity. We should indeed be compensated for the research, if it afforded nothing else than the satisfaction of knowing how the wise and great have speculated before us; but this gratification is of small value, when compared with the real utility which may be derived from such investigations. They illustrate the necessity of using our own minds in understanding the scriptures, by shewing the various extravagancies, into which men have deviated. They guide us to the manner, in which we should reason, by enlarging our field of view, and lifting us out of many prejudices that had confined our judgment. They will often assist our interpretation of the sacred writings by placing them in new lights, explaining their obscurities, and dispelling the phantasies that we had mistaken for a part of the word of truth. They will show us the gradual, and often not very honourable progress of opinions, that have grown celebrated in the world; and teach us, of how few and slight materials formidable systems of faith have been erected, by human ingenuity and polemick zeal.

Influenced by these considerations, we propose, in this and a succeeding essay, to take a rapid and general survey of the opinions that have been entertained among christians concerning the Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man. That account has been made of great importance in dogmatical divinity, and lies at the very foundation of most of the prevailing confessions of faith. This circumstance will give interest to our inquiries; and as we shall offer no opinions of our own, but merely relate what others have thought, no class of believers can with justice complain of us. Our design is not necessarily concerned with the theories of different theologians, on the *origin* of the narratives, which are contained in the three first chapters of Genesis. It will not seem irrelevant, however, just to mention, that some ascribe the intelligence, which they convey, to the immediate inspiration of God. Others, maintaining that we need not resort to a miracle when natural causes are

sufficient ; nor attribute to Moses, as an historian, a supernatural guidance to which he himself made no pretensions, have believed the source of his information to be oral tradition. Others have preferred the supposition of written documents, transmitted to the times of the great Hebrew legislator, and by him compiled and sanctioned. The ingenuity of some modern critics has attempted to distinguish these supposed documents into classes, on principles of internal evidence ; but without arriving at precisely the same results.

We pass over, too, the history of the six days' creation, as not essential to our present object. We will only remark, that some have imagined an absolute creation out of nothing to be described ; while others find in it only an account of the redemption of the earth from a state of chaos, and its preparation for the residence of mankind. Some maintain that it relates strictly a positive fact : while others see in it nothing but a fine picture of the gradual effects that were produced upon our planet, when it was rescued from its primaeval emptiness and darkness. However this may be, it exhibits a perfect model of simple sublimity : interpreted according to the rules, which we should apply to every other record of so remote an antiquity, it is philosophically beautiful ; and as far transcends every other cosmogony, which tradition has preserved as sacred, or mere speculation has devised, as the holy light of which it speaks transcended the shapeless gloom that it dispelled.

Having thus defined the view we are to take, let us turn to the representation of Moses, and say simply what it is. It declares that but a single pair were originally created, from whom have descended all the human race. They were made in the likeness of God. They were good ; a praise, which they shared with all the works of the common Creator. The first man appears in a garden abounding with delights, prepared for him by his maker ; and all nature is subject to him. He had passed through no helpless infancy, no gradual steps of progress toward maturity. At once he thinks and speaks, he walks and labours. The Lord himself is his immediate teacher. He yet knows no wishes, no feelings, that are not innocent as they are natural. He is not wild and rude ; nor yet cultivated : not without freedom of will ; but not yet exercised in the use of it. It was yet to be seen whether this freedom would continue to consist with his happiness, or whether its abuse would bring on sorrow, toil and suffering. The first woman is taken out of man ; an image, which illustrates the tenderness of the connexion, that was to exist between them : and the principle of life, of thought, and of will within them both, is the breath of God.

Such is the history : and there are allusions to it in various parts of the sacred writings. David, when he looked up to the starry heavens, expressed his grateful wonder that God should so exalt the feeble children of earth as to give them dominion over the works of his hands, and to put all things under their feet ; creating them little lower than the angels, and crowning them with glory and honour. In the 139th Psalm, man is described as “ having been curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth,” before he stood erect and living upon it, as its delegated lord : a description evidently drawn from the Mosaic idea of his having been moulded out of the dust. Elihu says in the book of Job, “ the spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.—I also am formed out of the clay.” The genealogies, 1 Chron. i. 1, are deduced from Adam as the common ancestor. In the same spirit the late Jewish authors wrote ; as may be seen in the apocryphal books of the Old Testament : Ecclesiasticus, xvii. 1—3. Wisdom of Solomon x. 1. and xv. 8 ; and in Philo, who regarded the Mosaic account as historically exact, and yet allegorized every part of it. The era of christianity succeeded. References are now found more frequent, and the style of them is unchanged. Our blessed Lord himself enforced the strong obligation of the marriage covenant, by citing two passages from Moses’ history of the creation, Genesis i. 27, and ii. 24. St. Paul frequently borrows from the same source. He speaks of man, 1 Corinthians xi. 7, as “ *the image and glory of God :*” and James in his epistle, declaring the iniquity of the tongue, says, “ therewith bless we God, even the Father ; and therewith curse we men, which are made after *the similitude of God.*” These representations inspire high conceptions of the dignity and worth of human nature. They exalt as much as is possible the import of that celebrated expression, “ *the image of God,*” which is used by the Hebrew historian and lawgiver no less than four times in two verses ; the 26th and 27th of his first chapter. Indeed, is not the whole tendency of the gospel to show that our nature is elevated in itself, as well as to elevate it infinitely more ? Is it not its doctrine, that the Son of God himself was man, and died for man ? And does it not intreat all, that they should not judge themselves “ *unworthy* of the resurrection from the dead ?”

To give even a compendious history of the opinions, that have found advocates, concerning the original constitution of man, would be to repeat the innumerable interpretations that have been given in ancient and modern times, of the account in the first chapter of Genesis : an enumeration that instead of

being capable of compression into an essay, would require one of those folios, that were so readily filled in the ages of darkness and controversy. The fathers of the church, the schoolmen, and many later writers, connected with the subject many subtle questions, which were nowise involved in it, and which it would be wasting our time to attempt to disentangle. The turning point of dispute was the phrase, "the image of God:" on this the whole of it was in fact suspended: our labour will therefore be made simple, by directing our attention to this alone.

Before the fifth century there was no schism on this subject. The fathers held different opinions, but without bringing them in any degree into contact with each other. They were unanimous in the assertion, that we are perfectly free to choose and to do either good or evil. Most of them understood by the image of God the gift of understanding, and freedom of will. Some, however, refining on this idea, and availing themselves of the twofold expression, Genesis i. 26, "let us make man in our *image*, after our *likeness*," maintained that a difference was intended to be implied between them. The *likeness* they supposed to consist in the endowments abovementioned. The divine *image* was entirely distinct. Some saw it in the erect form and heavenward countenance of the human race: others sought it in their destination to immortality: and others still, among whom was St. Chrysostom, the most eloquent of the Greek fathers, imagined it to be exhibited in their "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the face of the earth." The heads of the church at Alexandria, and especially Clement and Origen, asserted that the "Logos" was here referred to, the *original pattern*, according to which the human soul was formed; and by the divine "*likeness*" they understood those moral virtues, by the cultivation of which we may approach to a moral resemblance of the Deity.

This harmonious dissonance in the church, experienced for 400 years, was now to be changed into the harshest and most violent discord. The Pelagian heresy, as it has since been called, broke out; and the western part of Christendom was shaken with it. Pelagius was a monk of Wales, who, conceiving that the prevailing doctrines, which had become connected with the representations of Moses, were dangerous to good morals, and tended to encourage a false presumption, openly opposed them. This engaged him in a controversy with Augustine, which it has filled volumes to describe. The disputants were agreed in this; that Adam was made in the image of God,

and that this consisted partly in the intellectual nature that was bestowed on him, and partly in the freedom of will. They differed in this : Augustin affirmed that the *immortality of the body* was included in the image of God ; while Pelagius contended that man was made mortal, and had been from the beginning as he now is. From this time, the opinion concerning the original nature of man was suspended on that concerning the fall, original sin, and the doctrine of grace : in a word, on the triumph of *Pelagianism*, or *ORTHODOXY* ; for so the synod of Carthage and other councils named the parties, by decreeing the victory. The ideas of the perfections and the happiness of the first human pair, and consequently the change that was produced by the fall, seemed now to grow more and more excessive. John of Damascus, who died in the middle of the 8th century, and who was accustomed to follow in all doctrine the most approved guides, gives on this subject the most highly wrought descriptions.*

We have now come down to the schoolmen ; of whom it can offend no one to say, that they “worse confounded” the whole “confusion.” They proposed gravely a thousand impertinent questions, which, to us at the present day, it would seem as ridiculous to attempt to answer, as it was to ask them. The most celebrated among these were,—whether man was created “*in puris naturalibus*?” whether the divine image was immediately created with him, or afterwards superadded ? whether it was natural, or preternatural ? Many, among whom was Duns Scotus, the great Franciscan, declared that it was *natural* : an opinion, which tended towards Pelagianism, and somewhat reduced the lofty conceptions that were then prevalent, of the original divine “image.” They were met, however, by other scholastics, with Thomas Aquinas, “the angelical doctor” of the Dominicans, at their head. Aquinas taught that man *might have been* created “*in puris naturalibus* ;” but that the preternatural gifts of heavenly grace came upon him immediately at his creation. He upheld the opinions, which Augustin had first reduced, or rather expanded into a system. George Calixtus, a Lutheran divine of the 16th century, next struck out a middle course, with the hope of reconciling all differences : but he was rewarded with the reproachful name of Pelagian, and had not many followers.

The name of Isaac Peyrere, a Protestant of Bordeaux, now claims notice. Some of his opinions were most bold and singular : but the cogent logic of a prison persuaded him to abjure them

* De fide Orthodoxa, ii. 12.

with his protestantism, at the feet of Pope Alexander VII. He taught that there were men before Adam, who was the progenitor of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles; that men were created at the beginning all over the earth; that Adam and Eve were not made at once mature, but grew up like their posterity, from childhood; that they could not possibly attain to holiness and immortality through their original creation; and that no man ever died on account of Adam's transgression.*

The symbolical books of the Lutheran church are in sentiment with Thomas Aquinas: and the theologians of that communion have been so fond of dreaming wonders respecting the condition of the first pair in paradise, that they have scarcely fallen short in extravagance of the schoolmen themselves. Two of Luther's earliest disciples, Francowitz, or Flacius, and Andrew Osiander, made themselves heads of parties: but the point in dispute between them is not worth the trouble of describing to our readers, and we pass on to the Socinians. Socinus, and the Polish divines who were confederate with him, refused to consult on this subject any other authority, than that of their own understanding. They regarded all the high notions of the perfection of virtue and bliss in the paradisiacal state, as superstitious fancies: they denied that a terrestrial immortality, or an immortality to be reached without tasting of death, was ever designed for man, had he continued obedient: they interpreted "the image of God," in which he was made, to mean the permission which he had to command the use of all created things, and to exercise sovereignty over this lower world.

We have said that the Socinians professed to follow their reason only. We should do them injustice, however, not to add, that they avowed this in opposition to human traditions, creeds and commandments, not to the sacred writings. They did not set aside the scriptures, nor appeal to them as less decisive than their brethren of other denominations. If it was their fault to lean too much to their own understandings, we may ask what sect ever existed, that did not claim to be supported by reason? Did not Augustin, as well as Pelagius, reason? Did not Duns and Thomas at least believe they were reasoning?

We have thus said what we intended on the creation of the first man; cursorily of necessity, but we hope without confu-

* Præadamitæ, sive exercitatio super versibus 12, 13 et 14, cap. 5, epist. ad Romanos: quibus inducuntur primi homines ante Adam conditi. A. S. 1655, also, Systema theol. ex Præadamitarum hypothesi, A. S. 1655.

This work may be found in the Library of Harvard University.

sion. In another essay we propose to offer a similar abstract of what has been advanced concerning his fall and its consequences : a longer, we fear, and a harder labour.

ON THE USE OF THE TEXT, 1 JOHN, v. 7.

“For there are three, that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.”

I have lately been informed that the text of the *three heavenly witnesses*, as it is sometimes called, has been quoted in a pulpit at Baltimore, as a good argument for the doctrine of the trinity. Most of the readers of the *Christian Disciple* probably know that the text is spurious. Upon this subject, I have no intention of entering into an argument, but shall merely quote two passages from professedly trinitarian writers.

The first is from an article upon the Improved Version of the New Testament, published in the *Eclectic Review*. The author discovers no feeling of goodwill towards the editors of this version, and writes throughout as a trinitarian, but with much learning and ability, and a considerable degree of candour. Respecting the verse in question, he says ;

“Upon this passage (1 John v. 7.) we need not spend many words. It is found in no Greek manuscript, ancient or recent, except one to which we shall presently advert ;* in no ancient version, being interpolated only in the late transcripts of the Vulgate. Not one of the *Greek Fathers* recognizes it, though many of them collect every species and shadow of argument, down to the most allegorical and shockingly ridiculous, in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity,—though they often cite the words immediately contiguous both before and after,—and though, with immense labour and art, they extract from the next words the very sense which this passage has in following times been adduced to furnish. Of the *Latin Fathers*, not one† has quoted it, till Eucherius of Lyons in the middle of the

* The passage in which the reviewer adverts to this manuscript begins in the following manner. “One Greek manuscript we have said contained the clause. This is the Dublin or Monfortianus, a very recent manuscript, glaringly interpolated from the modern copies of the Vulgate, and distributed into the present division of chapters.”

† It has been attempted to be shown that Tertullian and Cyprian have cited the last clause of v. 7. Our readers may be satisfied on this subject, by referring to Griesbach *Nov. Test.* vol. ii. App. p. 13—15; or Porson's letters to Travis, 240—282; or Marsh's *Michaelis*, vol. iv. 421—424. See also, for a lamentable contrast, Travis's letters, 3d edit. 82, 53, 75—128.

fifth century; and in his works *there is much reason to believe that it has been interpolated.*

“Under these circumstances, we are unspeakably ashamed that any modern divines should have fought *pedibus et unguibus*, for the retention of a passage so indisputably spurious. We could adduce half a dozen or half a score passages of ample length, supported by *better* authority than this, but which are rejected in every printed edition and translation.”

The other passage which I shall quote, is one which I have accidentally met with, extracted from a latin letter of bishop Lowth to Michaelis; published in Michaelis' *Literarischer Buefwechsel*, (Literary Correspondence,) part 2. p. 428. The following is a translation; the original I give in a note below.

“We have some wranglers in theology, sworn to follow their master, who are prepared to defend any thing, however absurd, should there be occasion. But I believe there is no one among us, in the least degree conversant with sacred criticism, and having the use of his understanding, who would be willing to contend for the genuineness of the verse, 1 John v. 7.”*

Such, it seems, is the opinion of learned trinitarians, and many more passages might be quoted to the same purpose. But before bringing the charge of unfairness against those gentlemen who have made use of this verse, we ought to recollect, that they may, very probably, be ignorant that its genuineness has ever been disputed. There is another fact likewise with which, perhaps, they are unacquainted, viz. that some trinitarians, including the great master of modern orthodoxy, Calvin, have thought that the verse, even upon supposition of its genuineness, did not prove so much in favour of the doctrine of the trinity as is commonly supposed. The following is part of Calvin's comment upon it.

“The expression, ‘*these three are one*,’ does not relate to the essence, but to the agreement of the persons spoken of. The meaning is, the Father, and his eternal Word, and Spirit harmoniously bear testimony to Christ. Some copies accordingly read *us in* [i. e. *agree in one thing*]. But although you read *in unum* [*are one*] as it is other copies, still, there is no doubt that the Father, Word, and Spirit are said to be one

* Habemus in theologia rabulas quosdam in magistri alicujus verba juratos; nihil est tam absurdum quod illi, si res et occasio ferat, non parati sint defendere. Sed neminem credo jam apud nos esse, in Critica Sacra paulum modo versatum, et cui sanum sit sinciput, qui pro sinceritate commatis 7mi 1 Job: v. propugnare velit.

in the same sense as the blood and water and spirit, in the verse immediately succeeding.”*

ON PIETY TO GOD.

IT is of the first importance in a religious character, to have a regard to the Supreme Being in all actions and undertakings. Yet, even among those who appear to possess a good moral character, it is to be feared that some are destitute of a pious disposition. It is very possible for morality to have no purer spring than self-interest, and no higher aim than the praise of men. Such morality we may speak well of as members of society, for it may contribute largely to our security and well-being in the social state. But we cannot encourage men to place much dependance upon it as christians, because it does not partake at all of the christian spirit. Piety to God is the distinction and the glory of the christian's character. Divest him of this affection of the soul, and you may still call him a moral man, you may still call him a good man, but you cannot call him a christian. In whatever degree he is deficient in this virtue, he so far falls short of true and proper christianity. He has not yet attained to the perfection of that character which he possesses.

It is no less *strange* than it is lamentable that so many should be wanting in piety to God. There is no virtue which possesses so many allurements as this. There is no virtue in favour of which we can present so many powerful, engaging and popular considerations. Every thing within us and without us invites to the cultivation and exercise of this heavenly temper. Every object that meets our eyes points upwards to the One Supreme as its Creator and supporter; and shall not our thoughts be raised in contemplation to the Deity? All our noble and generous feelings spontaneously impel us to go out among the works of God; to talk of him and to praise him; and shall we disobey this divine intimation of our duty? Forbid it conscience, reason, heaven.

* *Quod dicit, tres esse unum, ad essentiam non refertur, sed ad consensum potius. Ac si diceret, Patrem, et æternum Sermonem ejus ac Spiritum, symphonia quadam Christum pariter approbare. Itaque nonnulli codices habent *εἰς ἓν*. Verum etiamsi legas *ἐν εἰσιν*, ut est in aliis exemplaribus, non tamen dubium est quin Pater, Sermo et Spiritus eodem sensu dicantur unum esse, quo postea sanguis et aqua et Spiritus.*

Piety has its foundation in human nature. It approves itself to all our best feelings, it recommends itself to us by its own intrinsic loveliness. Nothing can be more natural, nothing more beautiful, than a rational piety to God. We are so formed by our Creator as to adore what is great, admire what is excellent, and love what is good. And wherein does piety to God consist but in adoring, and admiring, and loving a Being who possesses all these qualities in perfection? A Being, who far surpasses all other beings in majesty and benignity? "For who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto our God?" Ought we not then to cherish and exhibit towards the Deity those feelings and affections, which his true character is adapted to call forth. This is piety: and surely there is nothing in it that is repulsive to nature; nothing that is visionary or extravagant. Indeed not to possess it would be in the highest degree unnatural; offensive to the very first principles on which we act. We love our friends: ought we not then to love our greatest Friend? We repay with gratitude our benefactors: ought we not to do this to our greatest Benefactor? "We have had fathers in the flesh, and we have done them reverence;" ought we not to pay this same reverence to our heavenly Father, and the Father of all? In short, piety to God is so natural and reasonable, that it cannot but live in the mind of every one whose heart is right. And wherever we do not find it existing, we may conclude that the affections of that man are perverted, or his moral sensibility lost.

Many of the purest pleasures and satisfactions of which the human mind is capable, flow too from piety to God; pleasures and satisfactions which we can derive from no other source. Indeed the cherishing of every good feeling is delightful; but the cherishing of a pious feeling is peculiarly so. Reader! hast thou never felt, in all the experience of thy past life, how pleasant a thing it is to return the kindness of a benefactor with gratitude? to pay back the protection and tenderness of a parent with filial love and reverence and duty? Know then that if you will endeavour to make the same return to God for all the benefits, which you are continually receiving from him; if you will cultivate and exercise towards your heavenly Father those filial sentiments that belong to, and become the affectionate child, the delights you will experience in fulfilling these duties, will be as much superiour to that, we have just alluded to, as the obligation to do them is greater, and the object of them more worthy. If to discharge our duty to man will give us complacency, how much more will the discharge of our

duty to God give us the same complacency ; but in a much more exalted degree ?

This is the rejoicing which a man of piety has *in himself*. *He also rejoices in the relation which he is conscious of sustaining to the Deity.* Being in the habit of holding daily intercourse and communion with God, he comes at length to consider him as his *companion and friend*. Regarding him in this light he has a confidence in him, to which a man destitute of piety must forever be a stranger. He feels that he has an interest in God, and he knows also that God has an interest in him. In all the vicissitudes of life, then, there is one Being on whom he can depend ; one staff on which he can lean ; one rock on which he can safely build,—the Rock of Ages. His piety never forsakes him, and it every where gives him peace. It pours over life a new lustre and lends it new attractions. In prosperity it is present to enhance and multiply our enjoyments, and in adversity it comes in to break the blow of misfortune, or bind up the wounds of the broken-hearted ; our guide in life ; our support in death ; our hope and triumph forever.

To those, who have thought much on our moral weakness and exposure in the present world, it is hardly necessary to insist on the importance of piety considered as the support, and the guardian of all our other virtues. We cannot hope to make any very high attainments in the christian life, unless we make this the powerful and animating principle of our conduct. The thoughts of God will overawe and regulate the soul. If we will habituate ourselves to realize God's omnipresence, the impression that he is always about us will sanctify all our labours and hallow all our enjoyments. The idea that he is ever with us ; our Father and Friend,—“of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,” will banish from our minds every low, and degrading, and unworthy sentiment, and fire us with the noble ambition to become holy, even as he is holy, and perfect, even as he is perfect.

Piety then, is one of the most rational, and important, and becoming dispositions we are capable of acquiring. We must add in conclusion, that it is absolutely indispensable, in order to secure to ourselves the favour of heaven. Again we feel ourselves called upon to assure our readers that their moral conduct may appear to men unexceptionable ; and yet they may be destitute of that vital spirit, without which they can have no claim to the felicity christianity promises to the obedient. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the *first* and

great commandment." And he who begins by breaking *this*, though he may pay a *seeming* respect to the rest, proves himself destitute of the very first principles of true holiness. He should remember that God judges not by the outward appearance of our conduct, but by the motives that influence us in it. And there is a morality which has no better motives than most of our sins; a belief of its present expediency: a morality which does not look for its laws and encouragements, above, or beyond the present world; "which is of the earth, earthy." We find no promises in the gospel to those who are contented with this sort of morality; and we are persuaded that it will not stand the test of the christian's trial.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE RENDERED MORE INTELLIGIBLE
BY A NEW PUNCTUATION.

THAT several instances occur in our printed copies of the Bible, where the text is obscure, in consequence of incorrect punctuation, might be easily shewn. I quote, as examples, a few verses, which, as they are commonly read, lose much of their pertinency; but receive a new meaning by being marked and read as interrogatories.

Genesis iv. 23, 24. Have I slain a man to my wounding? a young man to my hurt?

Matth. xxvi. 45, and Matth. xiv. 41. Do you sleep on now, and take your rest?

Matth. xxvii. 42. He saved others; cannot he save himself?

Mark vii. 9. Do ye well to reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition?

Luke vi. 9. Then Jesus said unto them, I would ask you, What is it lawful to do on the Sabbath-days? Good, or ill? To save, or to destroy?

Luke xvii. 18. Are there none found who returned to give glory to God, except this stranger?

Luke xix. 22. Thou knewest that I was an austere man?

John v. 37, 38. Did ye never hear his voice, or see his form? or have ye forgotten his declaration, that ye believe not him whom he hath sent?

John vii. 28. Do ye know me, and know whence I am?

John xi. 49, 50. Are ye so entirely ignorant? Do ye not consider, that it is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not?

John xi. 56. What think ye? Will he not come to the feast?

John xii. 27. What shall I say? Father save me from this hour? But for this cause I came to this hour.

John xii. 15. And they said unto her, art thou mad?

Heb. xii. 5. Have ye forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as children?

James iv. 5. Do ye think that the scripture speaketh in vain? Doth the spirit that dwelleth in us excite to envy?



IS RELIGIOUS FAITH A REASONABLE PRINCIPLE OF ACTION?

“WE walk by faith, and not by sight.” So said the great apostle of our religion. The principle has indeed been abused by the misrepresentations of the ignorant, and by the overheated zeal of enthusiasts. It has been ridiculed by the doubting; and by unbelievers of revelation, has been represented as a principle of action unworthy of thinking and of reasoning men. But cast your eye over your own ordinary transactions, and examine but for a moment the conduct of men in the most common concerns of life, and you will see that this principle, however abused and despised in the affairs of religion, as certainly guides the unbeliever as the christian; and that, without faith in a thousand circumstances and events, of which we cannot have the certainty of knowledge, it would be as impossible to live in the world, as it is impossible for us to please God, without faith in the promises and prospects of the gospel.

It may be proper to remark, that faith respects not only every thing past, of which we have not had the evidence of our senses, but in every action to which we are excited by a regard to the future, that we may strictly and properly be said to act by faith. Observe then how constant, and how extensive is its influence. You retire at night that you may sleep, and with confidence that you will see the coming day. Yet what is this but the *confidence of faith*? You cannot *know* that you will sleep to night, because you slept the last night. You cannot know that you will see the light of to-morrow, because you saw the light of this morning. But on the evidence of your past experience, you *believe*; and *trust*. You provide for your future wants; and you take your food, that you may be nourished and strengthened by it. But you cannot know that this food, instead of nourishing and strengthening you, will not be the cause of disease and of death. That it has hitherto nourished you, is but an argument from experience, on which you

build your faith that it will continue to nourish you. For the removal of any pain or disease, do you take the advice and follow the directions of a physician? Here you exercise faith in his skill; and both he and you exercise it also in the efficacy of the remedies he prescribes. You go out to your accustomed labours. And what is the principle which excites you to this exertion; which gives life and vigour to your efforts? Is it not the *faith* that you will receive the reward of your toils? The husbandman *waiteth for* the precious fruits of the earth, and *hath long patience for them*, till he receive the former and the latter rain. Are you induced, by the advice or the assurance of another, to an experiment, from which you hope for, or are confident of, a better reward of your labours? The end of your faith is still the same,—the reward you anticipate; but the ground of it becomes the experience and the testimony of him, whose advice and practice you have followed. Having committed any task to another, and being told that it is performed, do you pursue your plans with the same assurance, as if you had *seen* that the work was accomplished? It is the *assurance of faith*, which rests perhaps only on your general confidence in the veracity of him whom you have employed. You *believe*, when you are told that one of your neighbours, whom you saw yesterday in health, is to day stretched on the bed of sickness; or that some distant part of the world has been shaken by earthquakes, or destroyed by fire. In fine, in all our conversation, when we neither discern nor suspect a motive to deceive us, nor perceive any absurdity or contradiction in the relation, we readily yield our *faith*, and are actuated by our *belief*. The convictions of faith become as strong as those of sense; and we as truly act by faith when we eat, when we labour, and when we confide in the skill or the veracity of each other, as when, believing the promises of God, we give all diligence to make our calling and our election sure.

But let us extend our views of the operation of this great principle; and trace to their sources some of the actions, or courses of actions in men, of which we may form a judgment not less correct than themselves.

Have you seen the richly freighted vessel, returning to repay the enterprise of her owners? She has been under other skies; in other climes; among other people. She has exchanged the produce of her own soil for that of other regions. They who entrusted their fortunes to the expedition, are now recompensed for their confidence. But follow back the steps of this enterprise, and observe how few of them were guided by actual knowledge. Had he who was most interested in it never seen

the country, to which he sent his property? Then he knew of its existence only from the *testimony of others*; and however ample may have been this testimony, it could have produced only *faith*. He *believed* the existence of the country that had been described to him. He *believed* what he had read or heard of its inhabitants, its productions, and its wants. Led on by this faith, he entrusted his property to the ocean, notwithstanding the uncertainty of winds and waves. He confided in men who might die; or who might be treacherous, as others had been. But it was the strong belief that they would live, that they would be honest, and that the vessel which bore his property would escape storms and shipwreck, as others had escaped them, which animated his hopes of her return, and made him sanguine in his calculations. Seest thou then how faith wrought with his works; and that, but for his faith, he would never have undertaken the enterprise, whose rewards have so greatly enriched him?

Observe a man, the object of whose supreme desire is the glory of a great and distinguished name. He has regard to it in every plan he forms; in every course he pursues. It is almost constantly in his thoughts. It engages his strongest and best affections. He considers the time, and strength, and talents as comparatively lost, which have not been employed in its service. He not only gives his days and nights to toil, and anxiety, and suffering, for the accomplishment of his purpose: not only denies himself innumerable gratifications, which are every day offered to his understanding and his senses; but he exposes himself to every danger; he is every moment ready to meet death, and perhaps actually falls a victim of death, in the great cause to which he has devoted every faculty of his soul. But does he not as truly act by faith, as he does, who, in a course of religion and virtue, is seeking the honour that comes from God only? Is he not equally *a martyr to his faith*, as he is, who submits to death, or incurs the penalty of death, rather than give up his principles as a christian, or renounce his faith in the gospel of Christ? He *believes*, but he cannot *know* that he will obtain the glory that he seeks. And such are all the actions that have regard to the ends of human ambition.

Deprive man of faith in the ordinary course of circumstances and of events, and what would be the consequences? Or suppose any one resolved never to act, but where he had the certainty of knowledge to guide him. He would not labour; for he cannot *know* that he will be rewarded. Or if his family have not the means of support for another day, he will use no

exertions to obtain them ; for he cannot know that either he or they will live till to-morrow. Or if hungry himself, he will not eat ; for it is impossible to be certain that the first food he takes to sustain him, will not be the cause of his death. But I need not pursue the supposition. Its absurdity is apparent. It is glaring. We could no more live without faith in the testimony of others, or of our own observation and experience, than we could live without our senses, or without air. An unbeliever of revelation therefore lives by faith in the ordinary circumstances and events of life, as much as the most zealous disciple of Jesus ; and he who scoffs at faith as a principle of religion, is as much actuated by it in his own daily business and pleasures, as is the most pious in his endeavours to live as the grace of God teaches ; or as the dying christian, who rejoices in the anticipated happiness of heaven.

From this view of faith we infer, first, that it is a *principle of our nature*, equally as hope, or fear, or desire. It is as much a principle of our nature, that we should believe upon sufficient testimony, and conform our conduct to our belief, as that we should like, and dislike ; or, as that we should seek what we love, and avoid that by which we feel aversion. And we should act not less inconsistent with our nature, if we should refuse ever again to be actuated by faith, than if we were resolved henceforth to deny ourselves both food and sleep, and not to trust even for a moment to the evidence of our senses.

Second, In requiring us to walk by faith in his moral government, God demands of us no more than he does in his common providence. And in requiring us to seek the rewards and happiness of heaven, by that faith in Christ and in the instructions of his gospel, which will engage in its service our entire wills and our best affections, he demands no more than we cheerfully do every day, to obtain the riches and the pleasures of the world. It is an appointment of the *providence of God*, that we should believe the labour of spring and summer, to be necessary for the security of a harvest in the autumn. It is an appointment of the *moral government of God*, that we should believe in the necessity of a life of religious and moral obedience—a character and life conformed to his revealed will,—in order to his final approbation of us, and our eternal happiness. Admit the doctrine, that God is a moral Governor, and there is far more evidence of an inseparable connexion between our hearts and habits and character here, and our condition hereafter—between our present moral state and our future happiness,—than between our best directed labours, and the

riches and pleasures of the world for which we make so many efforts, and submit to so many sufferings. Though our labours are necessary to obtain the fruits of autumn, and we have sufficient grounds for our faith that, in due season we shall reap if we faint not, yet *here*, it may be, that a burning sun may dry up the springs of vegetation; or a desolating storm may tear it from its roots; or innumerable insects may be commissioned to devour it; or, at the very moment when our work of preparation is about to terminate, death may arrest us,—another may become the heir of our possessions, and enjoy the long anticipated fruits of our exertions and our hopes. But if God is a moral Governor, and the great purposes of his government are not accomplished in this world, by the full reward of piety and virtue, and the full punishment of impiety and vice, it is as certain as that God lives, and is wise, and holy, and good, that these purposes will be completely effected hereafter. In proportion then as the rewards and punishments of the future life are more certain, than the attainment of the objects of our faith in this life,—and they are so, in proportion as our future existence is more certain than it is whether we shall live till to-morrow, or to the greatest age of man,—in the same proportion is it more reasonable, that we should live by faith in the objects of eternity, than in those of this world.

By this view of faith we are therefore led, thirdly, to a comparison of the objects themselves of this world, to the pursuit of which we are prompted by the faith of obtaining them, with those in which God demands our faith as accountable and immortal beings. By the light of God's word, examine his moral government; and by the aid of the same light, penetrate as far as you can into that eternal futurity, in which the soul, purified by intercourse with its Creator, and by obedience to his laws, will see him as he is; will become one of the bright and happy society that encircle his throne; and, forever delivered from pain, and sorrow, and want, will forever advance in knowledge, and piety, and virtue, and happiness. On the objects here presented to our contemplation and promised to our fidelity, let attention be fixed, till the mind and heart have formed such sentiments as they are capable of obtaining, of the grandeur and worth of the prize of steady confidence in God, and of persevering devotion to his will. Then bring together every good that the world can give you; and say, which shall hereafter be the objects of your highest love, your strongest solicitude, and your most earnest pursuit. Do you waver in making your choice? I will only remind you, that the things which are seen—which can here be possessed and enjoyed,—are *temporal*. But the things which are unseen are *eternal*.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

KNOWLEDGE OF ONE ANOTHER IN THE FUTURE STATE.

THE question, whether we shall know our friends in the future world, has at some time probably interested every christian. Little direct information is to be gathered from the scriptures, and different opinions are prevalent, formed with various degrees of decision. Perhaps the following extract from a letter of Bishop Watson, though short, comprehends all that can be fairly said upon the subject.

“Our Saviour has said, that ‘we shall be like the angels of God,’ immortal; yet St. John has said, ‘It doth not yet appear what we shall be:’ there is no contradiction in this. We are sure of immortal life; but the connexions, habits, relations, intercourses of that life, are not revealed to us. I dare not speak with confidence on a subject whereon St. John professes his ignorance.

“Had you asked me, whether we should in a future state experience pain, and sorrow, and death, I should have answered, No. Had you asked me, whether we should retain a memory of our good and bad deeds, I should have answered, Yes; because I am certain that the righteous Judge will give such a righteous judgment, that every individual will have a consciousness of its rectitude. But when you ask me, whether we shall know one another in a future state, I hesitate in my reply. All that can certainly be known on the subject is this,—That God will not withhold from those, whom he adopts as his sons, any thing which can contribute to their happiness; and if the earthly connexions formed in this first scene of existence will contribute to our happiness, they will be continued to us, and that continuance implies a future recognition of beloved connexions. Yet, on the other hand, it may be said, if we know our friends and retain sentiments of affection towards them, we must also know our enemies, and thus be again exposed to emotions of fear, dislike, aversion: but in a future state we expect freedom from bad passions, and real tranquillity of mind; and it is probable that human affections will be absorbed in the love of God and of our Saviour.

“The strongest text for our mutual knowledge in a future state, occurs in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, chap. ii. ver. 19, where Paul says, that ‘They will be his hope, his

joy, his crown of glorying in the presence of Jesus Christ at his coming.' There is a similar expression 2 Cor. chap. i. ver. 14."

REPENTANCE.

BOTH reason and revelation instruct us to believe that the Creator of the universe wills the happiness of his creatures, not for his own sake, but for theirs. It would be impious to suppose that our vices could disturb his peace, or our virtues augment His felicity; this would be to make a God with the passions of a man, to render the infinite perfection of the Creator dependent on the imperfection of the creature. When, therefore, we read of the punishment denounced in the gospel against all manner of wickedness, we may properly consider the threatening as the gracious warning of a wise and affectionate Father, rather than as the tyrannical declaration of a cruel and vindictive God. Vice, and consequent misery arising from loss of health, of character, of fortune, of self government, and other sources, are generally, if not universally, connected together in this world, and we may from reason analogically infer that, if there is another world, they will be so connected there also. Now it hath pleased God, through Jesus Christ, to assure us that there is another world, and to confirm this analogical inference by a positive declaration, that the connexion which we observe here between vice and misery will remain hereafter. This declaration is made to us as if it were the arbitrary appointment of God that punishment should follow sin, rather than a certain consequence springing from the nature of things, that misery should follow vice; but the conclusion rests on the same foundation in whatever way we consider the matter; for what is the nature of things, what is the constitution of this world and of the next, but the positive appointment of God himself? Transgress and die, is a positive law; Be vicious and be miserable, is a natural law; they are equally the means of God's moral government of free agents; the latter is intimated to us by reason, the former is promulgated by the gospel, and they are, like their Author, both of them immutable. But these are not the only laws of God's moral government; there is another intimated to us by reason, and clearly made known to us by the gospel, and it is a law which mitigates the severity of the others, which administers consolation to our fears, and strength to our inability; it is this,—Repent and be forgiven—turn from wickedness, do that which is lawful and right; and though you have sinned you shall save your

soul alive ; this is the voice of Revelation ; and reason says, Cease from vice, and you will lessen if not entirely annihilate the misery attendant on it.

Repentance is a change of mind accompanied by a change of conduct ; this change of mind is then most perfect when it proceeds from the fear of God, from fear grounded on our love to him, and regulated by filial reverence and humble confidence in his mercy ; and it is then most sincere and certain when it is followed by change of conduct, from viciousness to sobriety of manners, from habitual sinfulness to habitual righteousness of life. A man may be actuated by a fear of punishment, and change his conduct from vice to virtue ; but this does not, strictly speaking, imply such a change of mind as is essential to true repentance. When a man abstains from murder, theft, robbery, merely because he fears a gallows ; when he conceals his intemperance, pride, envy, malignity, and evil propensities of any kind, merely to preserve his character from censure, and to exhibit a fair outside to the world, his heart is not right, his mind is not changed, his old man is not put off, his repentance is nothing. But—when a man might commit sin with secrecy, and, as to all human tribunals, with impunity ; when he might indulge his sensuality, gratify his revenge, satiate his envy, feed his malignity, without danger to his health, fame or fortune ; when he might do these things, and yet abstains from doing them, because God has forbidden him to do them, and because he is persuaded that God loves him, and forbids him nothing but with a gracious design to preserve him from misery here and hereafter,—then is his repentance sincere, his obedience is a reasonable service, his heart is in a proper state of resignation, humility, love, trust, and gratitude, toward the Author of all good.

WRITTEN AFTER A SUMMER SHOWER.

THE rain is o'er—How dense and bright
Yon pearly clouds reposing lie !
Cloud above cloud, a glorious sight,
Contrasting with the dark blue sky !

In grateful silence earth receives
The general blessing ; fresh and fair,
Each flower expands its little leaves,
As glad the common joy to share.

The softened sunbeams pour around
A fairy light, uncertain, pale ;

The wind flows cool; the scented ground
Is breathing odours on the gale.

Mid yon rich 'clouds' voluptuous pile,
Methinks some spirit of the air,
Might rest to gaze below awhile,
Then turn to bathe and revel there.

The sun breaks forth—from off the scene,
Its floating veil of mist is flung;
And all the wilderness of green
With trembling drops of light is hung.

Now gaze on nature—yet the same,—
Glowing with life, by breezes fann'd,
Luxuriant, lovely, as she came
Fresh in her youth from God's own hand.

Hear the rich music of that voice,
Which sounds from all below, above;
She calls her children to rejoice,
And round them throws her arms of love.

Drink in her influence—low born care,
And all the train of mean desire,
Refuse to breathe this holy air,
And mid this living light expire.

EPITAPH ON AN UNFORTUNATE YOUNG LADY.

[The following verses were written by the celebrated philosopher, Dugald Stewart. In the Annual Register for 1815, they are copied from a volume of poems published by Dr. Drennan. Our readers, we believe, will think with us, that they are distinguished by their elegance and tenderness. They may remind one of Pope's beautiful epitaph on Mrs. Corbett. Both agree in celebrating that quiet, unpretending patience, than which, perhaps, there are few virtues of higher value in the sight of heaven.]

A LINGERING struggle of misfortune past,
Here patient virtue found repose at last;
Unpraised, unknown, with cheerful steps she stray'd
Through life's bleak wilds, and fortune's darkest shade;
Nor courted fame to lend one friendly ray,
To gild the darkening horrors of the way.

When fir'd with hope, or eager for applause,
The hero suffers in a public cause,
Unfelt, unheeded, falls misfortune's dart,
And fame's sweet echoes cheer the drooping heart.
The patriot's toils immortal laurels yield,
And death itself is envied in the field.

Her's was the humbler, yet severer fate,
To pine unnotic'd in a private state;
Her's were the sufferings which no laurels bring,
The generous labours which no muses sing,
The cares that haunt the parent and the wife,
And the still sorrows of domestic life.

What though no pageant o'er her humble earth,
Proclaim the empty honours of her birth!
What though around no sculptur'd columns rise,
No verse record the conquests of her eyes!
Yet here shall flow the poor's unbidden tear,
And feeble age shall shed his blessings here:

Here shall the virtues, which her soul possess'd,
With sweet remembrance soothe a husband's breast:
And here, in silent grief, shall oft repair
The helpless objects of her latest care,
Recall her worth, their adverse fate bemoan,
And in a mother's woes forget their own.

CHAUER'S PREACHER.

[Mr. Orton has said, "there is much truth and weight in these lines."
This commendation appears rather cold, for the poetry of the passage is
as fine as its wisdom. It is an imitation of Chaucer by Dryden.]

He bore his great commission in his look;
But sweetly temper'd awe, and soften'd all he spoke.
He preach'd the joys of heav'n and pains of hell, }
And warn'd the sinner with becoming zeal: }
But on eternal mercy lov'd to dwell.
He taught the gospel rather than the law:
And forc'd himself to drive; but lov'd to draw.
For fear but frightens minds; but love, like heat,
Exhales the soul sublime, to seek her native seat.
To threats, the stubborn sinner oft is hard:
Wrapt in his crimes, against the storm prepar'd.
But, when the milder beams of mercy play,
He melts, and throws his cumbrous cloak away.
Lightnings and thunder, (Heaven's artillery)
As harbingers before the Almighty fly:
Those, but proclaim his style, and disappear;
The stiller sound succeeds; and God is there.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE IV.

Glorying in the Cross: A sermon delivered before the Associated Congregational Ministers of Salem and [its] vicinity, at Malden, Massachusetts, on Tuesday Sept. 8, 1818.
By JAMES SABINE, late Pastor of the Congregational Church, St. Johns, Newfoundland. Published by request.

WE feel some reluctance to make any reference to this sermon; because whatever notice we may take of it, will give the author a consideration to which he is not entitled. It contains an attack upon the Unitarian clergy of our country, particularly those of Boston, and upon the citizens of our metropolis generally. Some of our readers may recollect, that it is about a year, since the same person preached a sermon in commemoration of the benevolence of the citizens of this place, in relieving the sufferings of the inhabitants of St. John's, where he then resided; and had, if we mistake not, some further agency in expressing their gratitude. The character of the present discourse may be estimated from the following passage.

"But there is another class of teachers. 'Certain men crept in unawares who privily bring in damnable heresies, denying the only Lord, and our Lord Jesus Christ—even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandize of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.'—Whether this passage of Scripture be a prophecy, or a description of what had actually taken place, or whether it partakes of the nature of both, is of little consequence in our present discussion. It is very evident that the same 'Spirit' which 'speaketh expressly' speaketh 'truly' when he says 'that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Speaking lies, (not openly) but in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with an hot iron.' These certain men who bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, do it by stealth, creeping in unawares and privily, with feigned words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, by which to serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, do through covetousness make merchandize of the unwary. In putting these passages of Scripture together, I was never more forcibly struck with any thing in my life, than with the exact resem-

blance which the description bears to the once disguised, but now unmasked Unitarian clergy of these regions.

"The true character of this class of pretenders to the order of Christian ministers is delineated by themselves, or at least by an apostle of their own, and therefore to give them the credit for telling the truth in this case, can be no slander. They tell us that they propagate their sentiments by *cautious* and *prudent* sermons, gradually and insensibly bringing over converts to their system. Persons thus converted, while beguiled into *insensibility*, must be very senseless converts at best. A confessor prophet of their's tells us, that 'No reformation from prevailing errors could take place if those who are acquainted with the truth should, through fear of persecution, conceal it from public view'—and 'That it is base and unbecoming the dignity of a man in this nineteenth century, in this land of liberty and free inquiry, to bow down to popular absurdities and superstitions, and quietly to abandon the unalienable right of private judgment.' This is certainly the most manly way of propagating Unitarianism; the other must be a very base and *senseless* way: but these two ways involve no small contradiction, and indeed it must be so, for *hypocrisy* and *absurdity* are always near kindred.

"In opposing these enemies of the cross, there is but *one weapon* to be used, and a powerful and efficient one it is—'The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.' Preach the word, continue instant in season and out of season, rebuke, exhort, reprove with all long suffering and doctrine. Let there be no truce or compromise with these doctrines, assail them by all possible and legitimate means. Institute a most systematic attack, by preaching among these benighted people wherever an opening offers. Let your mission to these regions of darkness be as direct and systematic as your mission to the Chickasaw and the Choctaw Indians."

But whatever may be the character of the sermon, or its author, we think its publication is so connected with certain other facts which we shall point out, as to give it a sort of importance. It does not stand unrelated and alone. It is not Mr. Sabine, but some of those, whose language he speaks, and who have connected themselves with him, who will be the objects of our animadversion in the remarks which we are about to make.

The first thing, we shall observe, is that this sermon, probably from the circumstance of its gross inconsistency with what had been previously known of the author, seems to have attracted more notice than other similar productions; and many of our friends appear to have an erroneous impression, that there is something of novelty in this style of attack. But the fact is quite otherwise. The author has been with men who have taught him his manners and his language. He came here, we may reasonably suppose, favourably impressed toward the citizens of Boston. These first impressions he had to unlearn, and to acquire a different set of opinions and feelings. He has indeed made rapid proficiency, but he has not yet excelled his masters. We will point out a few of those compositions

which may have been given him to study ; and produce some quotations to show the correctness of the assertions we have made.

Our readers may, in the first place, turn to the two reviews relating to the Unitarian Controversy, as it has been called, which appeared in the *Panoplist*; where he will find the following passages :

Mr. Belsham "has shown us that many of his order," that is, many clergymen in our country, "would have one religion for the vulgar and another for the wise."—*Panoplist*, vol. xi. for 1815, p. 250.

They are guilty of "a hypocritical concealment of their sentiments." p. 251.

"The manner in which Unitarianism is propagated deserves a few moments attention." * * * * * Its advocates, or as the reviewer calls them, 'the advocates of Socinianism,' "have clandestinely crept into orthodox churches;" and "behave in a base hypocritical manner at which common honesty revolts" pp. 259, 260.

"The conduct of Mr. Belsham, rotten as he is, in point of doctrine to the very core, is purity itself compared with the conduct of these," i. e. of the Unitarians generally of this country. p. 262.

"We have long since ceased to be surprised at any measure which could propagate the principles in question." p. 256.

"The Unitarians' "universally bedaub each other with all the fulsome adulation which they can collect and invent." * * * * * "It is nauseating, it is intolerable, to find such daubing upon every page." pp. 262, 263.

Respecting their conduct toward the orthodox. "In pretence all is politeness and liberality ; in practice we find a rancour bitter as death and cruel as the grave." p. 264.

"How different" is the conduct of Mr. Belsham, "from the disguise of our Unitarians, and their whining complaints about illiberality in the orthodox in refusing to exchange with them." p. 265.

"The liberal party" "mutilate the New Testament, reject nearly all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, and degrade the Saviour to the condition of a fallible, peccable, and ignorant man." p. 271.

Respecting our University we are told,

"It is no longer what it once was. The lustre of science still shines, but the sun of Christianity is eclipsed." p. 259.

It is asserted of this Institution, in a hypothetical form of expression it is true, but one at the same time which conveys the meaning as distinctly as an express assertion—"that being, as it were, the heart of the Commonwealth, it is sending poisonous blood to the very extremities of the body politic." p. 259.

Respecting "the highest officer in that venerable seminary," we are informed ;

"That he has thought it a proper employment of his time to sit down coolly to a composition," which was afterwards "thrown into the world

to furnish new jests for the profane, and increase the natural antipathy of men to religion." p. 263.

He has been guilty of "one of the most pernicious and one of the most culpable examples of scoffing at religion which can any where be found." He, and the authors of many other articles in the Anthology, we are told by a direct implication, belong to the "race of scoffers;" and the passage which has excited all this offence, is said to be "written in a style which exactly suits the views and feelings of the Unitarian school." Vol. xii. p. 233 comp. vol. xi. p. 263.

The Panoplist reviewer, we think, need not fear at present that he will be outdone and superseded by Mr. Sabine. There is one trait indeed of the production of the former, which the latter gentleman has not yet attempted to imitate; and that is, the intermixture of exhortations to charity and moderation, with such specimens of the practice of these virtues as we have quoted.

"Let the orthodox," he says, "deal with their offending brethren in a solemn, affectionate, tender manner." vol. xi. p. 266.

"To treat their opponents with asperity, contempt, or reproach, is unworthy of them as Christians or as men." p. 266.

We wonder how this reviewer would write if he should be so unfortunate as to lose his temper; should be moved to something like asperity and reproach; and should in consequence cease to treat his brethren in such a tender and affectionate manner as he has done. In respect to *reproach* indeed, either this reviewer has entirely changed his opinion, or one of his brother reviewers considers him as in a gross error; for what is here declared to be unworthy of a Christian or a man is, in a late article in the same publication, vindicated as a right from which the author thinks that he cannot be debarred without suffering great injustice.

"And is it come to this, that they who are charged to 'contend earnestly for the faith,' must see the Bible assailed, the Saviour denied, and the whole fabric of religion swept away, without uttering one breath of *REPROACH* against the authors of this moral desolation? Silence here, is treason against the King of Zion. The men, who openly revile or studiously disguise the grand peculiarities of the Christian system, *deserve* reproach. Let them, who preach, or encourage others to preach in this manner, look to it."*

There is an indefiniteness in the application of this language, in the connexion in which it stands, which may perhaps leave

* Panoplist for January, 1819. Review of Dr. Porter's Sermon, p. 12.

the author at liberty to affirm that he did not use it concerning any clergymen, or any Christians among us; but concerning "Priestley, Belsham, and the great oracles of German theology," whom he has coupled together in a rather singular union. How it will be applied by others, however, and how he meant it should be applied, will be sufficiently obvious from such passages as the following, which occur in the preceding part of the article.

"We have no reason to fear that the lax theology of our own country, unaided, as it must be, by civil proscriptions and penalties, can ever succeed to silence the voice of truth in our pulpits. But we ought not to regard with indifference the struggles for ascendancy, which this system has maintained in the heart of New England; and the efforts, which it still makes, to decry the great and peculiar doctrines of the gospel."

After having given these few specimens of the language, which has been used concerning a large proportion of Christians among us, it may be worth while to add a single passage, to show how, in the opinion of at least one writer in the *Panoplist*, these heretics, both clergymen and private Christians, ought to be treated. It is from an essay intended to prove *the want of Ecclesiastical Tribunals*.

"But to call ministers to account for *heresy* is a domination over conscience! an intolerant attempt to crush free inquiry! forcing men to adopt your explanations of scripture! denying that the Bible is a sufficient rule of faith without human creeds! forcing technical and scholastic terms into the place of revelation! But not so fast. Do you not call *private* brethren to account for heresy? If not, you are transgressors of as plain precepts as are to be found in the Bible. 'A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.' For heresy alone Hymenæus and Alexander were 'delivered unto Satan;' though nothing worse appears against them, than an attempt to explain away the doctrine of the resurrection. Heresy, which is said to be permitted only to make a clear and public distinction between true and false professors, is numbered among the most abominable works of the flesh. All this, you may say (profanely enough) is the language of the severe and ardent Paul. What then says the charitable and sweet tempered John, who, it will be allowed, had as much love as any modern latitudinarian? What says he? Only read his three epistles, and you will need no more to convince you, that heresy is as decisive a proof of irreligion, and as noticeable by the church, as any immorality. At this an uproar is raised; the cry on every hand is, The Council of Trent over again! The horrors of the Inquisition! A crusade against free inquiry and the rights of conscience! I leave the declaimers to settle this dispute of interjections with Paul and John, and go on to say that if it is no tyranny to discipline *private* brethren for heresy, neither is it to deal with ministers. What would the objector have you do when 'there shall be false teachers among you, who shall *PRIVILY* bring in damnable heresies, *even denying the Lord that bought them*, and bring upon themselves swift destruction; and (when) many shall follow their pernicious ways, *by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*'

Permit the gentle John to answer. What says he? 'If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him, God speed; for he that biddeth him, God speed, is a partaker of his evil deeds.' ***

We might go on to quote other specimens, equally to our purpose with those which we have given. But we conceive

* The author of the above paragraph, who discovers such an indifference to all outcries respecting intolerance and ecclesiastical domination, appears to have similar feelings to those of the Recorder of London, who upon the trial of that GREAT heretic, William Penn. declared, *that it never would be well with England, till they had something like the Spanish Inquisition in that country.* Respecting the misuse of scripture in the passage above quoted, the reader may consult some Remarks upon the article in question, published in the General Repository and Review, vol. II. p. 283 seqq. Campbell's Dissertation on *Heresy*, prefixed to his translation of the Gospels. Clerici Historia Ecclesiastica p. 495 seqq. Ann. LXXXIII.—The English words *heresy* and *heretic*, do not correspond in meaning to the Greek words which are thus rendered in the common version. *Aiōretos* (rendered *heresy*) as used in the New Testament, means *sect, party, division, or faction.* In the common version, it is translated *sect* in the following passages:—Acts v. 17. xv. 5. xxiv. 5. xxvi. 5. xxviii. 22. *Aiōretikos* (rendered *heretic*) which is used but once in the New Testament, where it is connected as an adjective with *αἰρετικός* (*man*) viz. Titus iii. 10, means in that place either *a man, who joins a new sect*, that is, separates himself from the great body of Christians who were connected with, and acknowledged the authority of the apostles, or it means *one busy in founding such a sect, a factious man, a promoter of divisions.* It is understood in the latter sense by Campbell and Wakefield, the last of whom, in his translation of the New Testament, thus renders the passage: "A fomentor of divisions reject, after the first and second admonition." The *criterion* of such a person, he observes in a note, may be found in Rom. xvi. 17. On this word, beside the writers above referred to, the reader may consult with profit a tract by Caleb Fleming, entitled *St. Paul's Heretic; or several Characteristics of a Heretic collected from St. Paul's Epistle to Titus.*

Such is the true meaning of the Greek words in question, as used in the New Testament. The following statement, in connexion with what has been just said, will enable us to understand those passages which have been supposed to relate to *heretics* and *heresy*, and which have in consequence been so much misapplied and abused. The apostles, at the time when they wrote, were the authorized teachers of Christianity, miraculously commissioned for this purpose, the representatives of Christ himself. But amid the great moral and intellectual revolution which was going on under their direction, the breaking up and loosening of all old opinions, and the substitution of better doctrines, some men appeared who sought to become leaders of sects among Christians, without acknowledging the authority of the apostles. But in refusing to acknowledge the authority of the commissioned teachers of Christianity, their principles went of course to the destruction of Christianity itself. They were endeavouring to put themselves in the place of the apostles. They were at the same time, as appears from the notices which we have of them, unprincipled men, condemned by their own consciences, seeking some private gain or gratification in the founding of new sects, and whose doctrines led to gross immorality. It is perfectly consistent with the most common notions of

that our readers will begin to sympathize with us in the sense of weariness and disgust, which such an employment produces. We have established the fact, which we wished to prove, that whatever feelings may have been excited by the production, the title of which we have placed at the head of this article, it is really of the same character with others, which have been appearing for a series of years. We have shewn, that there were before writers among us, whose thoughts the author of this sermon has only borrowed, and whose temper and decency he has only imitated.

Since the publication of this sermon, its author has been ordained, or installed, as the pastor of a new society collected in

propriety, right, and duty, that the apostles should speak of these men with strong reprobation, and that they should warn their new converts against being seduced by them, or having any communion or intercourse with them. All this, it is needless to say, is very simple and easily understood. We may, however, further observe, that the directions of the apostles were rendered particularly necessary, by the unsettled state of the first believers, and the imperfect and erroneous notions, which it appears that many of them entertained, of the religion which they professed. But in any period, and in any state of things, if unprincipled men should appear, forming new sects, and teaching doctrines which lead to the destruction of religion and morality, it would be an obvious duty not to recognize them as Christians, and to have no intercourse with them which might countenance and favour their purposes. To such men, and to such only, the commands of the apostles are indirectly applicable. But their language, as every one knows, has been applied in a very different and most unjustifiable manner. The violent of almost every sect have continually represented themselves and their sect, as the only true believers, the only real followers of Christ and his apostles, and have denounced the great body of Christians who differed from them as, *heretics*; and have proceeded to apply to them all the characteristics of the early disturbers of the church, as of course included in the name.

Dr. Stebbing, a divine of the church of England, wrote several pamphlets on the subject of heresy, in controversy with the celebrated Baptist Foster, the same who excelled ten metropolitans in preaching well. Stebbing was a zealous and laborious defender of the right of THE CHURCH to discipline heretics. But we suspect that most of those who adopt his principles on this subject, will think his candour sufficiently indiscreet. He says, "If you will but allow the same liberty of judgment to the ministers of Christ in the execution of their office, which you allow to every single man besides in the direction of his conduct in all cases (which one would think to be a very reasonable demand) this you will see; that they who to them shall appear by the best use of their judgments, under the direction of God's word, to have departed from the faith, whether *with* knowledge or *against* knowledge; whether *sincerely* or *insincerely*, are to them heretics, and must be treated as such. * * * * * According to this account, I confess it will follow, that a man may be a heretic to *one* Church, who is not a heretic to *another*; and a heretic to *both*, who is not a heretic to *God*. This may be lamented as the effect of human weakness and frailty. But now infallibility is ceased, otherwise it cannot be." See *A Letter to Mr. Foster on the Subject of Heresy*. By Henry Stebbing D. D. 2d Ed. 1735. pp. 25, 26.

our metropolis to enjoy the benefit of his ministry. Of the clergymen who assisted at this religious ceremony, no differences of theological opinion, wide as they may be, would lead us to speak with disrespect; but we regret not a little that they have taken part in this transaction. It appears to us one proof among many, of the pernicious effects, which such writings as we have noticed are gradually producing upon the moral feelings and judgment of men: The person at whose ordination they have assisted, has said of the Unitarian clergy of this part of the country, that they are hypocrites, enemies of religion, assuming their offices for the sake of gain, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron. There are various considerations, which may prevent even a momentary feeling of resentment against the author of these charges in the persons thus attacked. But the charges are either true or false; and if they are false, their author is thoroughly disqualified for the office of a Christian minister. The gentlemen however of whom we have spoken, by assisting at his ordination, have said that this man is fit for the office of a Christian minister. They have thus virtually declared, that his assertions are true. We have charity enough still to believe, that they regard these assertions as utterly false, and that they would be very unwilling to use such language themselves. But if this be so, what are we to think of their agency in the transaction we have mentioned?

It appears from the statements which we have made, that there has been for a long time, a systematic attack, not upon the opinions, but upon the characters, of a large proportion of Christians among us. It has been carried on in such a manner as to excite in those, who have any sympathy with the writers engaged in it, feelings the most hostile to that temper and spirit which a disciple of Christ ought to cultivate, and thus to destroy what is essential to the Christian character. A stream of calumny has been pouring out for years, and spreading poison through the community, wherever a channel could be found or made for it. There has hitherto been but little attempt to stop its course. They who have been more particularly the objects of reproach, have trusted to their lives to vindicate their reputations. They have been reviled, and have been patient. There is more than one unanswered falsehood, on which *three thousand suns have gone down*. They have listened to the most insulting charges, and have heard propositions to exclude them from the name and privileges of Christians; and have in return begged their opponents to remember what is due to Christian charity, and to refrain from rending in pieces the church of

Christ. For the advancement of those opinions which they believe the truth, they have trusted, perhaps they have trusted a great deal too much, to the gradual progress of knowledge and intellectual improvement. They have perceived, or thought that they perceived, that the doctrines which they hold were incorporated with, and received confirmation, from every science connected with religion; and that at every advance in the critical knowledge of the scriptures, they opened more fully to view. We have, it may be, been too ready to leave our opinions to make their own way, and have too much forgotten the obstacles which they had to encounter. But our very moderation has been turned into a crime; and because we have been unwilling to obtrude our principles and arguments upon those who could not, or would not understand them; because we have perceived that religious error is often so blended with the most important truth, that a delicate and patient hand is required to remove the one without injury to the other; because we have thought sincere piety, and a good life, the only evidences of real religion, and that these might exist together with many speculative mistakes, which it was little worth while to disturb; because, to say all in one word, we have discovered no intemperate or injudicious zeal in making proselytes; we have in consequence been accused of a hypocritical concealment of our opinions.

When charges are brought which, if true, or if originating from any respectable source, would seriously affect the moral characters of individuals, it becomes important to examine from what source they do originate. Those on which we have been remarking, are, as we have seen, principally to be traced to the Panoplist. By whom then, it is a fair, nay, it is an unavoidable question, has that work been conducted? It was commenced and continued for some time under the superintendence of a man, of whom, fortunately, it is wholly unnecessary to speak, because his character is perfectly well known. It has since been continued by a person, of whom, on the other hand, we believe very little is known, except that he is the editor of a work, which discovers a spirit of which we have given sufficient specimens; and probably the principal author of the articles which we have quoted, and of others of a similar character. If this supposition be incorrect, we at least do him no injustice, for as the editor of the work in which they have appeared, he is equally responsible for their *moral character*, with the authors themselves. To these individuals we may now add the author of the sermon we have noticed, as having rendered himself equally conspicuous. It is a few men, such as

these, who have been so faithfully labouring, and not altogether without success, to excite a spirit of disunion and hostility in the Christian community. There is something unpleasant in this particular notice of individuals, however justifiable it may be. But we feel ourselves in some sort compelled to it. We should regret not a little to implicate in our remarks respecting certain writings, any persons to whom these remarks do not justly apply; and in order to prevent this in the most effectual manner, we must point out the writers, or the description of writers, to whom we consider that they *do* apply.

The system of attack of which we have spoken, is expressly or virtually directed against a very large proportion of those in our community, who are the most conspicuous objects of public respect and confidence. Look to those who guide public opinion, to those who administer your laws in the highest seats of justice, to your most distinguished magistrates, to your ministers of religion, to those who have given the most faithful attention to the study of the scriptures, to your most enlightened instructors of youth, to the most eminent among your scholars and literary men, and see how many of them, men too of unblemished lives, and apparently sincere believers, will fall into the class of those, whom the Panoplist reviewer would teach you to regard as destitute of all real moral goodness, without religion, enemies to Christ and to God, destined to everlasting misery, hypocrites and reprobates. Some writer in the Panoplist will perhaps accuse us again of praising our friends. It is a happy thought, and has been repeated already, we do not know how many times. But we have learnt our morality in a different school from that of the writers in the Panoplist; and do not think it an offence, when the reputation of our friends is attacked, to state their just claims to respect.

It is characteristic of the class of writers on whom we are remarking, both as they have existed in past times, and as they exist at the present day among ourselves, to appear to enjoy a sort of gratification and triumph in denouncing the wrath of God upon those Christians who refuse to adopt their opinions; in representing them as certainly exposed to everlasting destruction, in asserting or implying that the time is soon coming, when, they themselves being ministering angels, giving glory to God, their opponents shall lie howling and blaspheming with the devils, condemned forever to the hottest flames, and fiercest torments of hell. We do not mean to shock or offend our readers. We have a purpose, and an important one, in view. It is not in idleness or in sport, that we have conducted them to a lazar-house, where they may see some of the worst dis-

eases of the human mind; and no weakness or loathing ought to prevent us from finishing the examination. We have rather refrained from giving specimens of the kind of writing of which we have last spoken; but we will produce one most offensive example of it from a sermon of the Rev. Lyman Beecher; after quoting one or two preceding passages to show its application.

This gentleman says:

"To secure evangelical affections, the following truths are as essential, according to the nature of the human mind, as fire is essential to heat, or any natural cause to its appropriate effect; the doctrines of the Trinity, and the atone ment, the entire unholiness of the human heart, the necessity of a moral change by the special agency of the Holy Spirit, and justification by the merits of Christ, through faith."*

Again:

"The fact is, that those, who discard the doctrine of the Trinity, discard usually every other fundamental doctrine. Their system is not merely different from, but opposite to that denominated orthodox; so that if one be true, the other is false; if one be sincere milk, the other is poison."†

After these, and other similar passages, the discourse concludes in the following manner:

"In the view of what has been said, how momentous is the responsibility of ministers of the gospel; and how aggravated the destruction of those, who keep back the truth, or inculcate falsehood. It is, as if a man, not content with his own destruction by famine, should extend the desolation, by withholding nutrition from all around him; or not content with poisoning himself, should cast poison into all the fountains, putting in motion around him the waters of death. If there be a place in the world of despair, of tenfold darkness, where the wrath of the Almighty glows with augmented fury, and whence, through eternity, are heard the loudest wailings, ascending with the smoke of their torment:—in that place I shall expect to dwell, and there, my brethren, to lift up my cry with yours, should we believe lies, and propagate deceits, and avert from our people the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit.—And if there be a class of men, upon whom the fiercest malignity of the damned will be turned, and upon whose heads universal imprecations will mingle with the wrath of the Lamb, it will doubtless, my brethren, be ourselves; if, blind guides, we lead to perdition our deluded hearers."‡

Taken in connexion with what precedes, the meaning of this paragraph, we suppose, is as clear as if it were stated in express terms, that the fate here described will be that of all preachers, who disbelieve the doctrines which its author regards as fundamental; and that all their hearers are treading

* Sermon delivered in Park Street Church, Boston, at the Ordination of Mr. S. E. Dwight and others. By Lyman Beecher, A. M. Pastor of a Church of Christ in Litchfield, Connecticut. p. 26.

† *Ibid.* p. 38.

Ibid. pp. 40, 42.

with them the path to perdition. But perhaps it will be said, that what is here implied may be the honest conviction of the writer; and in that case, it becomes his duty to express it. We have, however, a further question to ask. Of what nature is this conviction, and how was it produced? Is it the conviction of his passions, his prejudices, his party zeal, his bitterness of spirit? Or was it, in fact, produced by the cool and unbiassed exercise of the understanding? If none of the motives operated, which we have just mentioned, it must have been, one would think, by a most painful and reluctant effort of mind, that he arrived at these conclusions. If we could perceive in any writer that he had been forced upon them by some irresistible error of reasoning, and that he had approached them with all that horror and dismay, which they are adapted to produce in a mind not thoroughly perverted by its miserable theology; we should indeed pity and pardon the weakness and the misfortune of that man. But such denunciations as we have quoted are no new thing. Since the time when the first corruptions of religion were introduced among Christians, they have been used by the violent of every sect; and have been continually heard clashing against each other, in that mutual hostility by which the Christian name has been disgraced. Does the preacher whom we have quoted, and they who think, and feel, and write like him, venture to believe, that among all those who have employed such language, their sect is the only one fairly entitled to its use? We now know what was the true character of those men, who, in past times, made such pretensions, and uttered such anathemas, as we hear at the present day. With regard to them, the delusion has past away; and they appear what they really were. If we would not have experience always in its infancy, it is time for us to recollect and apply our knowledge, to judge of what is from what has been; and to estimate those, who are denouncing and reviling their fellow Christians, in the same manner as we estimate those who were heretofore guilty of the same crimes.

It is a melancholy truth, which every chapter of ecclesiastical history may teach us, that the most contemptible vanity, and passions much worse than vanity, may shelter themselves under the name of religion. A few men, certainly not very distinguished for those qualities which usually command respect or esteem, come forward, and tell us in effect, that they and those who hold their creed, have engrossed all the religion, and all the real moral excellence in the world? and in vindicating their pretensions, they defame the living and insult the dead. Let us consider whose monuments, those men, whom we have now brought before the public, would deface and

overturn, if it were in their power? whose ashes they would scatter to the winds? If we were to select from the whole number of uninspired men, we know of none whom, for a union of the most comprehensive reach of intellect, of purity of life, and of sincere regard for religion, we should place before Locke and Newton. But Locke and Newton were Unitarians; and Locke was, in his day, assailed with as much animosity, and in language as coarse and assuming, as are at the present day, directed against the Unitarians of our country. There are no men who have brought more learning, more acuteness, or more true piety to the study of the scriptures than Grotius and Le Clerc. But the feelings of Grotius and Le Clerc were as different from those of the men on whose writings we have remarked, as light from darkness, as the spirit of a Christian from that of the most narrow-minded and intemperate bigotry. What more able and faithful defenders of Christianity have there been than Lardner and Paley? But Lardner was a Unitarian, and Paley, we suspect, our opponents will hardly allow to have been a Christian. We might go on to add many other names of those who have been guides and examples of mankind. And who are the men, who assume the privilege of dispensing reproach and denunciation? Upon what qualities of character do they found their claim thus to judge their brethren;—if they will allow us to lower them to that sort of equality which this name implies?

In regard to the portion of reproach which has fallen to our share, we cannot accuse ourselves, and no one, we think will accuse us of having been too sensible to these attacks. We fear, on the other hand, that we have been too indifferent; that we have regarded them too much as a mere personal concern; and have considered too little their pernicious effects upon the moral and religious character of the community. We may be secure from the fire that has been kindled; but we ought to recollect that wherever it may burn, it will consume the best feelings of men, all that endears us to each other, and will have nothing but an unfruitful waste where only weeds will flourish. In proportion as such writings as we have been considering leave any influence, those sober, honest and manly virtues by which our land has been distinguished, and that quiet and sincere piety which has exerted its blessed influence over so many minds, will disappear; and we shall find in their stead spiritual pride and religious vanity, all the uncharitable, and bitter passions of religious animosity, and all the vices which such dispositions will naturally produce. When calumnies and denunciations, like those we have quoted, begin to be regarded by the better part of society without strong reprobation,

tion; it will be too late to say, that they have not had some effect in deteriorating the moral feelings of the community. Men, honoured with the confidence and attachment of those with whom they are connected, are attacked as destitute of common honesty, as among the vilest and most pernicious members of society, as doing infinite and irreparable injury to all around them. If we look upon such attacks with indifference; if we become accustomed to them as mere matters of course; if we think of them only as indicating a certain violence of temper, and want of manners, in those by whom they are made; if we turn them off with a sneer or a laugh, there is danger that we shall begin to think lightly of every sort of calumny, that our moral sensibility will be blunted, and that our notions of right and wrong will grow confused.

It cannot be disguised, that the true ground of that warfare which has been carried on against a large proportion of Christians in our country, is that they reject certain doctrines, which they believe to be without any foundation in Scripture, or rather, doctrines which they believe to contradict its plain meaning. Whatever gross charges may have been brought, not immediately relating to this topic, yet every one knows that this is the real cause of all the hostility that has been manifested. The direct tendency therefore of such writings as we have noticed, is to set up a standard of moral goodness which is utterly false, and to make something else a substitute for true religion and virtue. This substitute is what is denominated orthodoxy. In proportion as a man is orthodox, he has all real moral excellence. If he be a heretic—no matter what fair appearances there may be—he is wholly destitute of it. The orthodox man is to be looked up to with respect; for he belongs to the small party of true believers. As to the heretic,—take care that you do not bid him, God speed; or you will break an express commandment. He is to be ranked with infidels and outcasts. It is unnecessary to say, that these distinctions often run quite counter to those sentiments respecting individuals, which are founded upon our natural and commonly received notions of right and wrong, of what does and what does not constitute moral goodness. If such doctrines prevail, we shall see among us, what has often been seen in other ages of the church, and in other countries, orthodoxy enough without religion or morality, Christians, who will appear to have received a new commandment, *to hate one another*, and an abundance of saints and religionists without the common virtues of men. The same spirit, which has elsewhere and in other

times produced these effects, has been actively at work among us.

But the indirect may be almost as mischievous as the direct influence of such writings. There is danger with regard to men, little disposed to become intemperate religionists, that they may be led to believe, that the temper and character which these writings exhibit have really some connexion with Christianity, and are such as our religion is adapted to produce. Their authors are pertinaciously insisting that they, and those who think and feel as they do, are the only true Christians; and that a very large proportion of all the most enlightened men, who have embraced our religion with sincere conviction, and endeavored to conform their lives to its spirit, have been in fact its worst enemies; men, who, to quote a common perversion of Scripture, have denied the Lord who bought them. The best disposed can hardly prevent their minds from being in some degree affected by what is continually repeated; and we fear that those, who are not very friendly to Christianity, will be ready enough to take advantage of such misstatements. There is danger that the men of whom we speak will write and talk about religion, till they in some degree associate with the subject itself, the disgust which their manner of treating it is adapted to produce. There have been at all times those who have pretended to be the exclusive friends of Christianity; and who, to manifest their zeal in her cause, have principally employed themselves in driving away from her service, by violence, or scoffs, or outcries, all those who would not acknowledge their claim to this distinction. Such religionists as these have done more injury and discredit to our faith; they have done more to impede its reception, and counteract its influence, than we can well estimate. True religion produces high thoughts, and enlarged conceptions, and noble desires. It infuses into man a new principle of life, and gives him the spirit of an immortal. It is the parent of all that is most liberal, and generous, and honorable. But what is *that*, which produces the character discovered in such writings as those on which we have remarked.

But we believe, and we are happy to believe, that some effects have resulted from these writings which were not intended. There has been, we think, a reaction against them of the good sense, and good feelings of the community. A large proportion of those who may differ from us much upon other topics, will, we believe, agree with us in this, that the religion which is *first pure, then peaceable*, was given for quite other ends than to nourish spiritual pride and mutual animosity among

its professors. The great body of our countrymen in this part of our land have too much plain good sense, and native shrewdness, too much honesty and real religion, to be easily manufactured into fanatics and unprincipled sectarians. To the great majority of those who may differ from us in their views of the doctrines of religion, we think we may appeal with confidence, respecting the unfairness and immorality of the mode of warfare which has been adopted. We beg them not to suffer such writings as we have noticed to have any influence upon their minds. We ask it for our own sakes, and for theirs. For ourselves, as an act of common justice. For their sakes, because the tendency of such writings is to disturb the peace of the community ; to alienate man from man,—Christian from Christian ; and to produce some of the worst passions by which the human character is deformed. If our doctrines be regarded as false, let them be attacked by fair argument. We will not shrink from it ; but if we continue to think them true, we will defend them as we can ; and, we trust, without losing our good will toward those by whom they are assailed. If, in the eagerness of controversy, some expressions should pass the bounds of decorum, we will not complain, and we hope we should not retaliate. But let our characters be spared. We are not infidels. We are Christians, with the most sincere conviction of the truth of our religion ; and with a deep sense of its inestimable value. We do not deny the Lord who bought us. We acknowledge Jesus Christ as our guide, instructor, and master, as the Saviour of the world from sin and error ; we have no stronger desire than to be found among his faithful followers ; to receive all the doctrines which he taught, and to obey all the precepts which he gave. We do not treat the Scriptures with irreverence. We may repeat again, what has already been said a hundred times, that we regard the Scriptures as the only rule of a Christian's faith, in opposition to all the systems of error, which have been the work of human folly and human ingenuity labouring together. We believe that the doctrines which we hold, are most fully and most explicitly declared in the Scriptures ; and it is therefore that we hold them with so firm a conviction. We do not separate religion from morality, and teach men to rest content in mere worldly virtue. We teach that they are inseparable ; that the same principles and affections, in their different operations, produce love to God, and love to man. That morality without religion is deprived of its principle of life, and that religion without morality is religion only in name. We teach, that Christian faith is the only source of Christian purity and of Christian charity ; and

that he, who would overcome the world, must believe that Jesus is the Son of God. We are not hypocrites, nor are we indifferent about what we believe the truth. We are ready to use earnestly every fair and honourable means for its promotion. We are ready to devote to this object our time, our talents, all that we can offer ; to encounter defamation and reproach, and to make, if need be, the sacrifice of a fair reputation.

We return for a moment to the sermon, of which we have taken notice in the commencement of this article. We should be doing, we conceive, not a little injustice to the citizens of our metropolis, if we were to imagine for a moment, that the circumstances attending its publication would have any effect to check that spirit of liberality, by which they have been so honourably distinguished. We should do injustice also, we believe, to the inhabitants of St. John's, if we did not suppose that they would regard this sermon with stronger reprobation, than any one among us has thought it worth while to express.—We hope and we trust that our fellow-citizens will always retain the character which they have established, for the disinterested employment of wealth in private charity, and to promote objects of public utility. On this subject we may be permitted to add a word or two before we conclude. Religious knowledge, literature, and science must look to the liberal among us for the means of their advancement. But it is necessary to exercise not only liberality, but judgment. Without the latter, he who gives his money, as well as he who devotes his time and talents, with the intention of serving his fellow-men, may entirely fail of his purpose. Inconsiderate and ill-directed liberality often produces almost unmingled evil. In our charity to the poor we may be giving to their vices, and not to their necessities. In contributing to purposes, called religious, we may be promoting error and not truth. Nay, a man may give his money to what is called a religious object, and do no more service to the community, than if he were to contribute towards erecting a distillery, for the purpose of supplying the poor with ardent spirits, gratis. But from well directed liberality, we may look for the best and happiest effects. From the union of this with the exertions of piety, talents, and learning, we may hope to see just and honourable notions of our religion generally prevailing, and producing all those consequences which are their natural result.

ARTICLE V.

An Alphabetical Explication of some terms and phrases, which occur in Scripture, in hymns and psalms, and other books of devotion; intended to promote the profit and pleasure of those who use them. By the late Rev. NEWCOME CAPPE. Boston, 1818. Printed by Joseph T. Buckingham. pp. 21.

Is not religion something simple, level to ordinary capacities, and intelligible by the unlearned? Is it not a record "made plain upon tables, so that he may run who readeth it?" Is it not "a high way, in which the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err?" Is it not a gospel for the poor, and therefore necessary to be clear and explicit? Is it not addressed to the illiterate who have not the capacity, and to the busy who have not the leisure, to engage in remote researches? Is it not practical? and is not its appeal direct and distinct to the affections and consciences of men? Where, then, is the need of laboured explications, or of any displays of acuteness or learning? Truly, if the bible is not to be understood without all the dictionaries, and notes, and commentaries, that are employed in its behalf, it might almost as well be in the hands of the priests again: for it has no suitableness to the wants and opportunities of those whom it is to instruct.

This representation is partly true, and partly erroneous. If we mean by religion a rule of life and a ground of hope, it is certainly most plain. There is no obscurity, no difficulty. The scriptures set in the strongest possible light the perfections of the Deity; the moral dangers and resources of man; what we must do, and what we may expect;—whatever, in other words, is *essential* to our religious knowledge, obedience, and faith. They do not teach more evidently that there is a God, than they do that virtue is his service, and a happy immortality "the recompense of its reward." What it is to be virtuous they leave no opportunity for mistaking. The will of God is as manifest to the humblest in condition, and the most limited in education and privileges, as it is to the most distinguished, intellectual, and learned.—But if we mean by religion whatever is contained in the writings of the Old and New Testaments, we must instantly perceive that it is by no means simple, nor easy to be thoroughly understood. This name is, indeed, improperly used in such an application. Those writings are historical of events connected with religion, or devout exercises, or religious documents: they contain the materials of our belief,

and are the authority, to which we refer and in which we rest. But they are not religion itself. They are in many places difficult and perplexing; but so are not the leading truths, which they unfold and enforce. They are obscure in many places; but not so are Christian morality and the Christian promises. They may suggest doubts and speculations; but all that is vital to religion is plain enough. They may be, and very often are misunderstood; but an upright conscience, and a humble faith, can never fall into dangerous error. The Bible is a book; therefore to be interpreted by the same principles as other compositions:—a miscellaneous book; therefore requiring an unusual share of discrimination:—a translated book; therefore needing the aids of human learning, and an acquaintance with other tongues:—a most ancient book; and consequently demanding a knowledge of antiquity, and familiarity with manners, modes of thinking, forms of expression, very different from those of our own country and age. Language itself is imperfect and ambiguous: even our own, and on common affairs. Controversial writers, in the same, and that their native tongue, are perpetually mistaking each other, and half their disputes are merely verbal. Think then how many difficulties must arise here; when the language is foreign, very peculiar, and no longer spoken:—when it comes from a strange people amidst strange institutions:—when it is employed often on topics that are local, involving circumstances but partially transmitted to us; and often on controversies that have ceased and are forgotten:—when it now hides its meaning in allegory, and now rises to the boldest flights of poetical rapture. Beside all this, the Bible has come down to us through the midst of conflicting sects, through ages of ignorance and superstition, through the hands of system-makers. It is so prescribed to us from infancy what meaning we are to affix to its expressions; every word and phrase of it has become so appropriated; that we scarcely know how to exercise our reason on the subject; scarcely know how we should have interpreted the scriptures, had no human creeds and confessions condescended to direct us how we *must*. It is a great source of error, that we annex to the words of holy writ the meaning that early habit, and not personal inquiry, has led us to apply to them. This is in effect to choose for our religious teachers, in a greater or less extent, and with more or less directness, the disputants of the most benighted times, that the gospel has ever looked upon. There is a large list of terms, which Christians most commonly misunderstand, from having heard them always used in some peculiar acceptance, and in connexion with certain theological opinions. Thus, “to

be saved," conveys to us instantly the idea of being received to heaven after death; "to be condemned," to be doomed to eternal punishment: though this is far from being the usual import of those expressions. When we hear of "the day of judgment," our fancy kindles at the thought of a simultaneous resurrection, and assembled worlds, but there are several passages, in which it cannot mean this; and our Swedenborgian brethren are not the only Christians, who do not believe that it ever does.

We think it must be obvious to all, that a philological, not a party explication, of the words that have been the most subject to abuses, must be of great service in assisting men to an intelligent use of the sacred Scriptures: for it is those abuses, that are the fountain head of sectarian extravagance. The sermon of the excellent Paley "on caution in the use of Scripture language," has done, we doubt not, great good; although confined to a few popular religious phrases. The posthumous little work of Mr. Cappe, which has given occasion to the preceding remarks, tends to the same end, though entirely different in plan and form. It aims at nothing but to give, in words as plain and few as possible, the different significations, belonging to those expressions, which are important, and of frequent occurrence in the bible and religious writings drawn from it. Every thing from the pen of so enlightened and devout a man deserves respect: we have only to regret that his list is no larger, and that he has not been more full on those words, of which he has found occasion to take notice. As a short manual for those, who would read "with the spirit and with the understanding," we cannot but think it may be of considerable utility. We will offer but two or three short extracts, and close this article.

"ATONEMENT. Removal of that, by which incapacity or disqualification for the service of God has been contracted: reconciliation with God: declaration of it: sanctification: consecration to God, or to his service."

"TO COME, TO COME FROM GOD, TO COME INTO THE WORLD. These phrases, in scripture, frequently refer to the mission of a prophet, and are to be interpreted of his assuming his public character, coming forth in the name of God to exercise his ministry in the world, and to discharge the commission with which he is invested." "*To come down from heaven*, figuratively, to be given by God, to be sent from God, by him authorized, and furnished for the errand."

"HELL. The grave; death; the state of the dead; the unseen world; the place or state of those, upon whom a sentence of final condemnation has been passed and executed; sometimes *temporal* ruin and destruction; deep distress and trouble of this present life."

"SALVATION. Deliverance; preservation; in the language of Scripture it often signifies deliverance of Jews and Heathens from the disadvantages of the dispensations under which they lived: from the burdens of the Mosaic law; from superstition, idolatry, ignorance, sin, fear, doubt; by

the Gospel of Christ. It sometimes signifies God the author of salvation ; Christ the minister of salvation ; the gospel the instrument of salvation. See REDEMPTION."

"SIN. *To be made sin* : to be judicially condemned, whether legally and righteously or not ; to be treated as a sinner ; to be hardly thought of ; to be accused unjustly ; to be singularly afflicted ; to suffer by the hand of the magistrate, by the unkind judgment of other men, or by the deed of providence."

Several interpretations are here given to one word : but the intelligent reader will seldom, if ever, be left in doubt which he should apply to the several passages which need the assistance of the "Explication."

The pamphlet of which we are speaking contains but twenty-one pages. Within such narrow limits much must be omitted, and nothing can be dwelt upon. Conciseness and simplicity, however, are rarely carried to faults ; and the very rudiments of rational interpretation are much wanted among us.

ARTICLE VI.

A practical view of Christian Education in its earliest stages. By T. BABINGTON, Esq. Member of the British Parliament. First American from the third London edition. To which are added translations of the Latin sentences and notes. Boston : Cummings & Hilliard. 1818.

OF the importance of the subject, to which this little work invites us, there can exist no reasonable doubt. It is inseparably connected with the best hopes and prospects of society ; and every attempt to illustrate or recommend it is entitled to respect. Indeed it may be regarded as a leading feature in the moral history of the present day, that this subject has excited so much attention. It has called forth some of the finest powers and purest feelings in its cause. In nothing has female talent been more happily exerted ; and to the labours of Mrs. Hamilton, and More, and Edgeworth, we should in justice ascribe the important changes, which have taken place since the commencement of this century, and which may be particularly seen in the simplicity, practical good sense, and freedom from vulgar errors, with which the great subject of education is now generally regarded, and its acknowledged principles applied.

The author of this work is well known in the political and religious world ; having frequently distinguished himself in the British Parliament as the advocate of freedom and humanity.

The experience he has enjoyed in the work of education, even more than the honourable station he fills, gives him a right to be heard ; and much of what he has offered will approve itself, we doubt not, to serious and reflecting minds. We can cordially concur with him in all his convictions of the paramount importance of religion in education, though we should be unable to follow him in some of his speculative views. He thus exposes his ideas as to the prevailing indifference of parents on this subject, contrasted with their zeal and anxiety to secure the temporal advantage of their children.

“ Is a son intended for a learned profession ? He is sent to school. The father is earnest that the master should ground him well in grammar, give him a taste for classical literature, and call forth his powers in composition. A college and tutor are selected with anxious care to promote his intellectual improvement. An earnest solicitude is felt, that he should become a sound and elegant scholar ; and inquiring friends are told what progress he makes in his pursuits. Again, suppose, that a more humble walk of life is chosen by the parent, and that the boy is to be a tradesman ; with what care does he select a master, who perfectly understands his business, and will be likely to make the boy thoroughly acquainted with it ? But how seldom are their spiritual interests the object of equal solicitude ! Are masters chosen with the same care for the promotion of these interests ? In fixing on schools and colleges for boys destined to the higher professions, and on masters and counting houses for those, who are to move in a more humble line, is it a matter of prime consideration to select those, which are known to be favourable to true religion ?” p. 15.

And after an ample illustration of the same subject, he asks,

“ Can we consult our experience on these points without exclaiming—What prudent care in human things ! what negligence in divine ! The result of such negligence may be easily anticipated, and is lamentably apparent in the character and habits of our young Men.” p. 18.

Now there is no one, who thinks seriously upon the subject of religion, but will cordially subscribe to these sentiments, as applied to simple uncorrupt christianity, and will lament with him the great inattention that prevails. Let religion in its purity and beauty be made the very basis of education. Let its plain, its alluring, its undisputed truths be continually impressed, as entering essentially into all our hopes of present, as well as of future usefulness and happiness ; and let their influence constantly accompany and sanctify the intellectual progress. But there is infinite danger from attempting to indoctrinate the youthful, and still more the infant mind, in the peculiarities of a sect. It is rendering that disgusting, which should appear, as it indeed is, most lovely and attractive : and it is well if, in the end, it do

not create a disrelish for every thing connected with religion itself.

It seems to us, that there can be scarcely a greater abuse in education, than to make it the instrument of a sectarian theology. Here, if any where, controversy is out of place. It impedes the native growth and expansion of the powers ; it makes religion a prejudice instead of a principle ; calls to its aid our passions and our ignorance, when its peculiar province is to enlighten the one and subdue the other ; or else, by a re-action, produced partly by impatience of constraint and partly by disgust at a revolting system, it drives the pupil to the miserable refuge of infidelity. These remarks will not be thought misplaced by any, who have considered the history of those academic institutions, where literary and intellectual progress have been made subordinate to the views of a party.

In the second chapter the author recommends a very early attention to the temper and habits of children, and exposes what he justly deems the error of delay or neglect. His general views on this subject seem to us very judicious, though they borrow something of their complexion from the system, with which the mind and pen of the writer seem strongly tinged. We quote the following.

“In a few weeks after its birth a child’s reason begins to dawn ; and with the first dawn of reason ought to commence the moral culture, which may be best suited to counteract the evils of its nature. Let me appeal to every mother, who delights to view her infant, as it lies in her arms, whether it does not soon begin to read the human face divine, to recognize her smile, and to show itself sensible of her affection in the little arts she employs to entertain it. Does it not in no long time return that smile, and repay her maternal caresses with looks and motions, so expressive, that she cannot mistake their import ? She will not doubt then the importance of fostering in its bosom those benevolent sympathies which delight her, by banishing from her nursery whatever is likely to contradict them.”

“But parental cares soon extend. In a short time, impatience and selfishness show themselves in a child, and are accompanied by fretfulness, jealousy, anger and envy. At so early a period does innate corruption display its powers, and call for the restraining hand of a parent ! But how are these evils to be counteracted at an age, when both the body and mind are so tender, and neither arguments nor explanations can be understood ? Undoubtedly great delicacy of treatment is required. The character of the child must be studied, and if possible such corrections must be applied as will not deeply wound its feelings. It is surprising what female ingenuity, quickened by maternal tenderness, will achieve in this way.” pp.32.33.

And after adducing some particular examples, he proceeds with the following admirable sentiments, which are so just and interesting, that we feel unwilling, as we are compelled, to abridge.

"But how, some parents may ask, how can this be effected at so tender an age? It seems to us impossible. Believe me, much may be done with very young children, by placing gradually before them with cheerfulness and affection, and in a spirit suited to the occasion, religious truths, associated as much as may be with images pleasing to their minds. These may be so set forth and brought home to the feelings by little and simple illustrations, that while the tender mind is imbued with the first rudiments of religious knowledge, reverence and affection for divine things, if God smile upon the endeavour, shall be excited in the heart. *But special care must be taken not to give fatiguing lectures, nor to make too powerful calls on the feelings.* 'Here a little and there a little' must be a parent's motto in conveying instruction at this age; and for that little, the lessons must be chosen, when the child is most likely to lend a willing ear; and the subject must always be dropped, before it becomes tiresome. Very short and simple stories from Holy Writ may be employed with great advantage. But in conveying instruction, it is a most important point for the parent always to have in mind, that far more may be done by exciting the sympathy of the child, than by appealing to its reason. Things indeed should always be presented to it in the garb of truth and good sense; but unless its feelings are in unison with its convictions, it may be perfectly persuaded of truths without being influenced by them in practice. And how are the appropriate feelings to be excited in its bosom? Chiefly by the feelings of the parent being in unison with the subject on which he speaks. Is he dwelling on the greatness of God, or on his all seeing eye, or on his eternity, or on his glory? Let his own heart harmonize with his lofty theme, and probably the right strings in that of his child will vibrate. Is he describing the divine love and tenderness, and mercy, especially as exemplified in Jesus Christ? If his own feelings are impressed by the picture he presents, those of his child are not likely to be altogether unmoved. But who can be so absurd as to hope, that when religious truths are taught as a schoolmaster teaches the grammar, good impressions will be made on the heart? Do we see in fact, that when the Catechism is so taught, any such impression is made? Step into a village school, when that compendium is learnt merely as a task, and you will find the children as little affected by its truths (even if they understand it) as they are by the lessons in their spelling book. One would almost think that they conceived it pointed out the high privileges and the sacred duties of the inhabitants of the moon, and that they had nothing to do with it, but to get it by heart. Few if any parents, it is hoped, who make religion a branch of education, proceed in a way so utterly irrational, as the generality of village schoolmasters in teaching the catechism; but, in whatever degree they approach to the village school system, in that degree, must they look for a similar result." p. 35.

The third chapter contains general recommendations to guard parents against some evils, not uncommon in families. They are for the most part characterised by great judgment and good sense; and obviously the result of experience. We were particularly pleased with the last, on the importance of parents being much with their children, and attentively studying their characters.

"The mother is much more with her children than the father, but generally, I think, not so much as she ought to be. This is the more to be lamented, because women are admirably fitted for training their offspring in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They have a remarkably quick

insight into character; and a warmth of affection, a tenderness and a delicacy, which win the affection of others, and enable them to correct faults without giving offence, and to present christian principles and virtues to their children in their most amiable form. I believe there has seldom been a man, that has not in after life looked back on her instructions and example with reverence and delight.—Every hour which a christian mother spends with her children has balm on its wings. She contrives to make even their pastimes a moral lesson; and though she cannot (and it is not desirable that she should) make their regular lessons a pastime, yet she adapts them well to the abilities of her scholars, accommodates them well to times and circumstances, and divests them of whatever is oppressive and revolting. To mix the pleasant with the useful is at least as important in education as in poetry; but good mothers far exceed good poets in that art. Surely, then, a mother should be jealous of every thing, which keeps her from the bosom of her family; a sphere, in which she is so gifted to shine, and to be a blessing to those most dear to her. How sad is it, when she throws away this pure gold for mere dross, by giving up those hours to an excess of visiting and company, which ought to be spent among her children!" p. 62.

We seriously recommend this to the attention of those mothers, who allow themselves to forget their highest and noblest duties in unnecessary and superfluous attention to domestic concerns, or amidst the gayeties of fashionable amusements. The habitual presence, and unseen, but certain, influence of a mother, is of inestimable importance on the minds and hearts of her children. We have witnessed and admired it in some of its choicest and holiest influences. It is like the small rain upon the tender herb.

The extracts, we have already made, will be sufficient to indicate the nature and spirit of the work, and will supersede the necessity of a more minute description of its merits. Of its style and literary execution we forbear to speak, except to remark, that these were clearly a very subordinate object in the mind of the writer. We just add, that among the topics of the following chapter, we noticed with pleasure some remarks on the effect of the *personal character of parents*, on the *means for the support of parental authority and influence*, and particularly on the *difficult and disputed subject of emulation*, which, as distinguished from the simple desire of excellence, and involving the wish to surpass others, he condemns as an unhal- lowed principle of action; as scarcely, if at all, to be disjoined from jealousy and envy, from pride and contention, incompatible with loving our neighbour as ourselves, and a principle of such potency as to be likely to engross the mind and turn it from the motives, which it should be the great business of education to cherish and render predominant.—We readily agree with the author, that the principle of emulation is questionable and dangerous; that its natural tendency is to call into exercise our

most selfish feelings, and that through disappointed ambition it is not seldom a source of misery. But it is difficult in the course of *intellectual*, much more we conceive than in that of *moral* education, to substitute an equivalent ; or to say, by what efficient motives boys of the same standing, in pursuit of the same studies, and desirous of the same honours, shall be quickened to their exertions without somewhat, at least, of that mutual comparison and competition, which are inseparable from the principle of emulation.

There is however one sentiment, which has been strongly impressed upon us from the perusal of this work, and that is, the *importance of a simple, affectionate, and encouraging view of religion* to the work of education ; in other words, of a strict adherence to the simplicity and tenderness, that pervade the gospel. We do not mean, that our author has exhibited a strong contrast to this, for his good sense and observation, and still more his paternal feelings, evidently correct and soften what in less kind and skilful hands would have been repulsive. But notwithstanding this, we see the influences of a mistaken theology ; something of that obscurity and much of that gloom, which belong to the doctrines he has espoused, and which render the system, which contains them, in our apprehension, unsuited to conduct the instruction of the infant mind. In the first place, it seems to us of infinite importance, that the character and government of God should be exhibited to the understanding of a child in the simplest and most alluring manner ; that nothing should be offered to obscure the grand idea of his unity, and still less of his perfect, impartial goodness. For it must be remembered, that none of the explanations, by which contradictions may be reconciled to a theologian, can be comprehended by the young pupil ; and that what is difficult or obscure to others, must be utter darkness and confusion to him. When therefore Mr. Babington tells us, (page 91) that “children must not be puzzled in religion—that we must avoid passages, that have a direct bearing upon disputed points,” we most cordially concur. But when he adds, as he does in the next sentence, that “the great aim should be to make by divine aid their heavenly Father and their sanctifier, but ABOVE ALL *their Saviour and his Gospel*, the object of their reverence and their affections,”—it seems to us, he is falling into the very error, he is desirous to guard. We stay not here to discuss the question of the equality of the Son with the Godhead ; but we ask, whether, under any system of faith, there can be the least truth or propriety in exhibiting our Saviour (and that in his mediatorial, consequently his subordinate character) as an object of reverence ABOVE our “heav-

only Father." The only effect of such instruction upon the mind of a child, that reflects at all, must be to darken and confound. And it seems to us, that the extreme difficulty, rather we should say the impossibility, of giving *under this system*, at that important age, any clear or satisfactory views as to the object of worship, affords in itself no slight *previous* indication, that it cannot be a part of that Gospel, one grand end of which is to instruct the ignorant, and to guide the young to God. How much more simple, how much more affecting, the instruction of our Saviour himself—"This is life eternal: to know **THEE** the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Neither can we regard the doctrine of inherent, *total depravity*, to which frequent reference is made in this work, as in any view a proper principle in a system of education. Not only because in our apprehension it is unsupported by scripture, but because even supposing its truth, it can never on this subject be applied to any useful practical purpose. For let a parent's speculative views be what they may, and his professions of them sincere as they ought, we are persuaded that he never will, that he never can, look upon his infant child as a being totally depraved; or commence his work of instruction, as if he had nothing to do but to root out corruption. This dogma might enter into his theological creed, and darken his views of mankind in general; but the common sensibilities of his nature would be perpetually opposing its influence within the circle of his family. With something less of theoretic devotion to a system, he might admit,—what personal experience and observation no less than the word of God most clearly teach,—the great deceitfulness of the human heart, the wayward propensities of our nature to sin, and the infinite danger, to which virtue is exposed from the maxims, habits, and examples of an evil world: and convictions, like these, scriptural and rational as they are, would be more than sufficient to supply the necessary rules and cautions; and would excite to parental vigilance with far happier effect, than the gloomy, discouraging sentiment, which our author supposes.

For ourselves we look upon religious education as eminently a means of grace; one of the earliest, most important and efficacious ordinances of heaven, to form, direct and elevate human character. Its principles therefore should be simple and easily understood, the dictates of reason and experience, and above all, the clear instructions of God's word. They should exhibit such views of the Deity as are most encouraging and attractive. Nor will it be difficult at that susceptible age, to impress the most important truths of religion. The child can early be taught

his relation to and dependence upon his heavenly Father. He can soon learn to reverence and love Him as the great Being, who forms, sustains, and blesses all; who brought him into life, who rocked the cradle of his infancy, and to whom he owes his health, and friends, and every thing he enjoys. By very simple, yet touching instruction he can be taught, that all, which he sees about him, of the glory and beauty of creation in heaven, earth, air, and sea, is the work of God—and thence he will be led to adore.

But we may extend early religious instruction much farther than this; for as Christians we possess a system of religion admirably suited by its simplicity and purity to affect and form the infant mind. When separated from the errors and corruptions of man, with a sublimity and energy all its own, it approves itself at once to the contemplation of the philosopher and to the feelings of a child. Besides the paternal views it opens of the character of God, of his mild and benevolent government, of his unfailing bounty, and of his universal, unintermitted care; besides the awakening and salutary truth it enforces, of his all pervading presence, and of his heart-searching eye, it exhibits in the person and example of Jesus Christ an object peculiarly suited to attract and delight even the youngest mind. And it seems to us, that there is nothing, in which the moral grandeur and sublimity of his character were more apparent, than in its adaptation to the conceptions of children. It would seem, as if he had softened for them the splendour of his perfections, that he might win and engage their hearts. His gentleness, his meekness, his simplicity and truth, his tenderness and love, are precisely the qualities, which render their period of life the most engaging; and by an affectionate and judicious parent may be exhibited with an admirable influence, as the model of their imitation. Here is the grand advantage of Christian education, that in its perfect morality it prescribes no precept, without furnishing at the same time a most alluring example.

But we do not mean to enlarge. We hope that the republication of this little work may be useful in exciting increased attention to one of the most important of all objects. There are parents, who anxiously think of every thing for their children, but how they shall form their characters and prepare them for an immortal life. To such we earnestly recommend the pious and faithful zeal of this exemplary father. He may convince them, that there are considerations, infinitely more valuable than the present comfort and prosperity of their offspring; but they will better learn for themselves in the pages of the New-Testament, the doctrines they must teach, and the pure spirit of that religion, which they must labour to infuse.

ARTICLE VII.

Observations on Penal Jurisprudence and the Reformation of the Criminal code; with an Appendix, containing the latest Reports of the State Prisons or Penitentiaries of Philadelphia, New-York, and Massachusetts, and other Documents. By WILLIAM ROSCOE, Esq. 8vo. London. 1819.

THE contents of this volume, as they are the result of real philanthropy, address themselves forcibly to all the benevolent, who, to the common compassionate regard for the wretched, unite a willingness to aid, by their individual exertions or influence, all endeavours to relieve the suffering, to reclaim the guilty, or to invigorate generally the moral principle among men. They are particularly suited to awaken a strong interest in those, who have at heart a feeling for the purity and peace, and, if we may so speak, the integrity of our society in its progress to refinement.—It is not confined to the philosopher, to know that, as society advances, crimes multiply faster than virtues; and those who are happiest in the consciousness of the comparatively unsullied character of our society at this day, of our present youthful innocence, are perhaps the saddest as they contemplate the moral changes, that await a manhood of power consolidated and immense, and an old age weakened by wealth and corrupted by luxury.

To *extirpate* moral evil, is among the dreams of the visionary. To apportion with a discriminating regard to the subjects of it, punishment to crime,—by chastisement or restraint to subdue or soften the obduracy of the vicious; by a wholesome discipline to chasten and control the wayward; in short, so to lay the sanctions of the law, that by every form of penal application the delinquent shall feel himself rather drawn to penitence than driven to despair,—is among the noblest aims of the legislator and philanthropist.

The main object of the work before us seems to be in aid of the glorious attempt of Howard—to interest public feeling and enlighten public opinion, by presenting views of the various systems in operation on the European Continent, in England and our own country, and by stating their defects and advantages, to suggest the necessity and means of changing some and improving others. The tendency of all the reasoning in the book (except that upon some isolated questions, such as the abolition of punishment by death, and others, all of too wide a scope to admit of hasty discussion by him or us) is such, to be sure, as discovers a little of the systematizing spirit, and would go to

substitute a Penitentiary for all the forms of punishment, coercion or restraint, as the grand corrective of all crime—from guilt of the deepest die, to delinquencies which fault and folly have barely tinged.

Though our readers may not coincide with all the arguments, however plainly they proceed from a feeling heart and an intelligent mind, yet the facts communicated and considerations offered in this volume to those who would “do good with knowledge,” entitle it to much attention. There are some particular considerations which make it of unusual importance to us on this side the water. Our population is not only swelling beyond parallel, but of the thousands flowing in upon us from under the operation of different and various laws, very many will probably be rightly adjudged to tenant for a time, and crowd our prisons. The question then becomes an important one—How shall their punishment be made productive of good to themselves and the community? Mr. Roscoe labours solely to answer this question. Both his general arguments,—we mean those founded on the nature and effects of punishment,—and his inductive reasoning from the many valuable facts with which his book is stored as to the existing varieties of prison discipline as well as the codes of penal law, unite in support of a Penitentiary as best suited to answer the ends of all punishment. First as respects the individual, to soften the mind and not harden the heart, and secondly as regards the community, to turn the labours of the imprisoned to the public account; and at the same time hold out to the transgressor the opportunity of amendment, and furnish him with motives to reform. We cannot, in a notice which is intended only to invite attention to an important subject, begin with a statement of Mr. Roscoe’s sentiments and doctrines in the several departments of Penal Jurisprudence, and lead our readers after him through the chief prisons of almost every state and metropolis in Europe; giving next a full account of the prisons, prison-discipline, and penal laws of England; then crossing the water, and entering into a minute history of the State Penitentiaries and Prisons in our own country, describing and accounting for their original success and subsequent decline of usefulness; then discussing the best mode of Penitentiary discipline, and closing with a large and full appendix, stored with documents and facts, all going to substantiate the positions and confirm the reasonings of the author. Much less shall we attempt to answer all the arguments (many of which we hold to be exceedingly fallacious and ungrounded) which he has ingeniously enough arrayed to beat down established doctrines, that are at war with his Penitentiary project, and to

establish his point. We shall however enter a little more into a detail of the contents of this book, and notice some of the author's peculiarities of sentiment; and shall give some extracts, which may very probably furnish a better knowledge of the work, than any general statements of ours on the subject of which it treats.

Mr. Roscoe begins with discussing the motives and end of Punishment; and as his whole system hinges on his peculiar sentiments here, which, as expressed, we think, are without sufficient qualification, we shall give what we deem the essence of the doctrine.

"Instead of connecting the ideas of crime and punishment, we ought to place together the ideas of crime and reformation—considering Punishment as only one of the modes for effecting such reformation."

"It requires but a very slight acquaintance either with the principles of human nature, or the history of civil society to be convinced, that punishment, simply and in itself, has never been found a sufficient preservative against the commission of crime. The first impulse of the mind upon the infliction of pain by way of punishment is not contrition, but resentment; a hardening of heart, not only against those who inflict it, but against the rest of the world; and too often, it is to be feared, a resolution to balance the account, as soon as possible, by a repetition of the same, or a commission of a greater offence. Hence, it has been shown by the experience of all ages, that as *punishments have increased in severity, crimes have been multiplied*. It is only by the calm exercise of reason, by removing the inducement, or correcting the disposition to crimes, or by taking a sincere interest in the welfare of the offender, and convincing him, that the evils he experiences are the unavoidable consequences of his own misconduct, and are inflicted upon him for his own good, that we can expect any beneficial effect. Upon the practicability of this is founded the great plan of modern improvement, called the *Penitentiary System*, the advantages of which are every day becoming more apparent, and which, when perfected by experience, cannot fail to produce the most important and happiest results on the moral character and condition of mankind." p. 10.

By the reformation of which he speaks, he means that of the individual criminal—thus laying too entirely out of the idea of punishment, its terrifying effects on all who are not within the immediate grasp of offended Law. Though we are aware that this doctrine of his is occasionally qualified a little in this work,—yet we are forced to confess, and we do it once for all, that the whole tenor of his reasoning, and the effects of his proposed improvements have too *exclusive* a tendency to ameliorate the condition and improve the characters of those, whose guilt has subjected them to punishment, and too remote and weak an influence in the prevention of crime. So long as the fears of men shall be among the prime regulators of action, so long must punishment, if we would not surrender the peace of society, have something more in view than the mere reformation of the offender.

We come to a Chapter, which does not need our praise, and which, if our limits permitted, we would give to our readers entire—on the *Prevention of crime*. This subject is ably discussed. Crimes are rightly attributed to the vicious habits of the age. The prominent are specified. Intoxication is at the head of the list. The second, is the open and unrestrained practice of gaming—originating in the highest classes, and descending, and corrupting as it descends, through all ranks, till it reaches the very children in the streets. The third, is the alarming extent of female profligacy. This enumeration will apply to our own society as forcibly as to the English; and as the establishing a correct sense of moral duty must be at the bottom of every endeavour to prevent crime—the exertions of the benevolent in counteracting these vices will do more toward prevention, than the building of many prisons and penitentiaries.

As we shall not be able to examine very minutely Mr. R's. Penitentiary Plan, we ought in justice to give some of the general principles on which he rests the propriety of its establishment. Objecting, as he does most strenuously, to the specific punishments, of which Montesquieu, Beccaria, Voltaire, and the Abbe Turreil are the most distinguished advocates, he proceeds to lay out the ground for his Penitentiary, by the aid of arguments, strikingly plausible, yet to us not wholly satisfactory. He says.

“When we speak of punishing crimes, we are in danger of being misled by a figure of speech. In fact, we do not punish the *crime*, but the *individual, who commits the crime*; and whatever end the punishment is intended to answer, it must bear a relation to the nature, disposition, and circumstances of such individual. To hang up indiscriminately a certain number of persons, because they have committed a certain act, without any regard to the peculiar circumstances under which such act was committed, or by which every different case is distinguished, or even without any clear idea of the result to be produced, would be the height of folly, if it were not the height of injustice; and with regard to inferior punishments, it must be apparent on the slightest reflection, that the same punishment, applied to different persons, may produce not only a different, but a contrary effect, and that which may be necessary to *reform one*, may only serve to *harden another*. To apply the same punishment to all is therefore a kind of *empiricism* in legislation, which pretends by a certain specific to cure a certain crime, without any reference to the state of the party, on whom the nostrum is to be tried.” p. 76.

“We must inquire into the character, temper, and moral constitution of the individual, and acquaint ourselves with his natural and acquired talents, his habits and his views, in order that we may be enabled to adopt such measures for his improvement, as may be best adapted to the case. If he be *ignorant*, we must *instruct* him; if he be *obstinate and arrogant*, we must *humiliate* him; if he be *indolent*, we must *rouse* him; if he be *desponding*, we must *encourage* him; and this, it is evident, cannot be

accomplished without resorting to different modes of treatment, and the full exercise of those moral and sympathetic endowments, which subsist in a greater or less degree between all human beings, as incident to our common nature." p. 77.

Thus is the fitness of a Penitentiary to be the *sole* instrument of punishment in the hands of the Executive, made out to the satisfaction perhaps of many, who may not have seen human nature under its most hideous forms, nor have looked so attentively into its construction, as to know that the heart may be callous to every thing else, yet alive to the startling denunciations of the Law's awful vengeance.

As the appendix contains a fuller history of the Penitentiaries in our own country, embracing an account not only of their establishment and growth, but of their management and discipline, than the chapter devoted to this subject in the body of the work, we refer our readers to its complete and accurate statements for much valuable information. The Chapters respectively on the penitentiary systems of the Continent, and that of England, we must also pass with a single observation—that the latter contains, among many interesting facts as to the character and discipline of the existing establishments in England, a notice of the able and successful endeavours of Sir Samuel Romilly, to soften some of the severest features of the British penal law, by expunging from its code a number of its most sanguinary statutes; and also, those of Sir William Blackstone, Lord Auckland, and Mr. Howard, in obtaining in 1779 the first legislative encouragement of the Penitentiary plan;—and that the former embraces a general view of the varieties of prison and penitentiary discipline on the continent, and a valuable record of the facts ascertained by the laborious personal examinations of Howard, and other philanthropic travellers. The following is from the account given by the Hon. Henry Gray Bennet, who visited the prisons of Paris in 1814 and 15, to a Committee of the House of Commons. He states

"Though little advance has been made in France towards a penitentiary system, yet the greatest pains seem every where to be taken to keep the prisoners in a state of active and useful labour; and under proper restrictions and regulations, there seems to be no trade, that cannot with safety be received within the walls of a prison; that in the prison of *St. Pelagie*, where persons are confined for small offences, the imprisonment is for various terms, none above ten years. There were three hundred and fifty criminals, varying from all ages, from ten years old to sixty. A general system of work is introduced; there was hardly any one idle; work is found by manufacturers in Paris, and a person is in each workshop, to watch over and instruct the workmen. p. 124."

"In the St. Lazare there were eight hundred and eighty women under sentence. The common crime was domestic theft, and the majority of the prisoners, servants in Paris. The system of correctional police seems to be good. In twenty years, about twelve hundred have been discharged, out of whom about two hundred have again been confined; and many persons, who have been there, are now living rich and respectable at Paris. The prison is inspected daily. Mass is performed once a week on Sundays. No prayers on week days. No religious or moral instruction whatever. A general system of labour prevails throughout the prison. From one hundred to one hundred and thirty, in each work-room under one inspector." p. 126.

"In the Bicetre, (a prison in Paris) six hundred and eighty two persons of all descriptions were confined, four hundred of whom were at work in different trades. Some earned as high as thirty or forty sous a day. The earnings were divided in thirds, as before mentioned. No irons used—but the prison was in general dirty and offensive." p. 127.

Our remarks have so grown under our hands, that we have but little time or room to notice the last, and, in our opinion, decidedly the most able and philosophic chapter of the work—that on the Discipline of a Penitentiary. We wish it were in our power to lay the whole of it before our readers; for it cannot well be abridged. His prominent rules are, that a Penitentiary should never be a place of confinement for the untried; that it should not be a *goal*; that a person who had once been discharged should never be again received; that corporal punishment should not be resorted to, but measures more consistent with humane feelings and Christian principles be adopted, to reclaim the offender and restore him to society;—that a penitentiary should be in the community, what the lungs are to the human body, an organ for purifying the circulation, and returning it in a healthy state to perform its office in the general mass; that society should be as far as possible prohibited, and each criminal be confined, by night at least, alone—reform must come from reflection, and solitude will force reflection; that reasonable relaxation should be allowed; and, with regard to the application of motives to voluntary labour—it is as justly as eloquently remarked, "It is not perhaps too much to say, that the greatest cruelty, that can be exercised upon an individual, is to separate his labour from his hope; to compel him to strike a certain number of strokes, but to deprive him of the sentiment that should invigorate them. Let the reader reflect upon this, and consider what is the curse of slavery." He adds, that for this reason, whatever the criminal obtains should be applied to his entire profit and advantage; that these profits however should be subject to deductions for his maintenance, and restitution to the injured; and that a continuance of good behaviour should be the ground of a recommendation to

the proper authority for a discharge. The whole object is concisely stated in the following passage.

“Upon the whole it seems indispensably necessary, in order that Penitentiary establishments should succeed to their full extent, that the principle, upon which they are founded, should pervade, and be continually manifested through the whole establishment. That principle is *Benevolence*, exerting itself in promoting the real and permanent welfare of the individuals there confined. Unless this object be fully understood and strictly adhered to, it will be in vain to expect any favourable result. *The reformation of the criminal should be the motive, the object, and the measure of all our exertions.* Every kind of corporal punishment should be strictly prohibited. Solitary confinement in cases of extreme obstinacy should alone be allowed; and this has always been found sufficient to soften the most obdurate disposition. Every prisoner should be preserved, as far as possible, from contamination, by separate confinement at night, and by a diligent superintendence, while pursuing his avocations, whether alone or in company, by day. When he labours, it should be wholly for his own profit, subject to such out-goings, *for his maintenance, and other just and reasonable objects, as may be defined.* Independence of character and ability to provide for himself, are among the chief objects of his attainment, and these can never be acquired unless he be encouraged *to trust to his own efforts, excited to feel his own interest.* Cleanliness of person should be most strongly recommended, and rigidly enforced, not only as essential to health and comfort, but as conducive to *moral order, rectitude, and self-respect.* Every disposition to improvement should be encouraged by the expectation, that a diligent perseverance in industry, obedience, and propriety of conduct, will be rewarded by a diminution of the term of imprisonment. A strict attention to avoid all profane, indecent, and offensive expressions, is indispensably requisite, and even reserve, and silence, and quiet, will occasionally prove great restorators; but above all, every effort should be made to raise their minds to a due sense of their situation and destiny, as *rational and immortal beings*; and (in the impressive language of a friend) ‘to substitute the *godly* fear of *doing wrong*, for the *slavish* fear of *punishment.*’ The happy consequences that have attended the humane and persevering endeavours of Mrs. Fry, have demonstrated what may be accomplished, in the most hopeless cases, by kindness, good sense, and a sincere sympathy in the wants and sufferings of others. Such an example cannot fail to diffuse itself, and call forth followers in every part of the Kingdom; and there is every reason to hope, that the buildings now erecting, or to be erected, for this purpose, will be not only in name, but in fact, *PENITENTIARIES.*” pp. 171—173.

We have been led imperceptibly along to say more than we intended, though less than we could wish, in our notice of this book. But we conceive that we are well employed in attending, however hastily, to subjects of so great importance to the safety and the virtue of society, as those which are here treated. It is of the first consequence to us as citizens, to know how to protect ourselves against the depredations of the vicious, and as Christians, to ascertain the most probable methods of reclaiming the wicked, and restoring to them the character and

hopes they have lost. The Christian philanthropist will not fail to be interested in all suggestions, and speculations, and plans relating to this subject; while the exertions which have been made, and are now making, especially the late astonishing renovations in Newgate, will convince him that much is possible, though perhaps not all that a warm heart might wish. In this country however, though much is to be done, yet far less is necessary than in the country for whose benefit our author was writing. It was a main design of his work, to operate in relaxing the severity of the English criminal law, whose code, he says, "if executed according to the letter, would be the most sanguinary in the world." We may be grateful to Heaven, that among our distinguished civil blessings, there is little necessity for amendment or change in the Penal Law of our country; and that,—while we are not the less bound to avail ourselves of all the means, which the benevolence of other countries may suggest to us of alleviating any useless suffering to which the guilty among us may be subjected,—we are permitted to look abroad upon a land, through the whole extent of which, from the pure original fountains of the law, Mercy and Justice flow together.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

France.

WE have lately seen the numbers of two religious periodical works which have been commenced at Paris, during the last year, and which have been received for the Reading-Room of Harvard University, through the politeness of our countryman S. V. Wilder, Esq. now resident in that city.

The one is a protestant work, entitled *Archives du Christianisme* (Records of Christianity), commenced in January 1818, and published monthly in numbers containing each 36 pages, 12mo. price 6 francs a year.

The other is a Catholic work, entitled *Chronique Religieuse* (Religious Chronicle), begun in June, published in numbers, which appear irregularly, but on an average about once a week, containing each 24 pages, 12mo. 26 numbers make a volume, the price of which is 9 francs.

Both these journals are respectably conducted, and contain a considerable proportion of interesting matter. In each we

find complaints of the great want of pastors in France both Protestant and Catholic. In the *Chronique Religieuse*, there are various articles relating to the divisions by which the Roman Catholic church in that country is at present disturbed; one party maintaining high notions of the power of the Pope, and the other defending the liberties of the Gallican church; one treating with great harshness those priests, who, during the time of the revolution, took the *constitutional oath*, and the other defending their cause; one endeavouring to restore the Romish religion as it formerly existed, and the other discovering a more liberal and enlightened spirit. It is to the latter party, that the conductors of the *Chronique* decidedly belong; though at the same time, they appear to be sincere and zealous Catholics.

On the whole, what we have seen in these journals, as well as what we know from other sources, affords encouragement to hope for a better state of religion in France than has previously existed in that country. Toleration is now established. There appears to be little or no restraint from public authority upon freedom of discussion. Writings, such as the journals before us, show that neither true religious sentiments nor a belief in Christianity are extinct; and those who appear as defenders of our religion, both Catholics and Protestants, seem to have just notions of what is essential to its character.

We will give a few extracts from those passages which seemed to us most likely to interest our readers.

In the *Chronique Religieuse* for August 10th, 1818, we find the following notice of *Peace Societies*.

"During some years past, *Peace Societies* have been forming in England, and still more in the United States of America; and particularly in Massachusetts. Their object, which is in a high degree laudable, is to prevent and put an end to war. To promote this object they have published various writings, which are read with great interest."

After some remarks upon the sentiments of Erasmus, of the Friends, and others, it is observed;

"The writings of which we have before spoken consider the subject under every aspect, and seem to have exhausted it. It cannot be doubted that they furnish a refutation of the arguments of Lord Kaimes in favor of war."

Then, after a short account of some of the topics treated of in the publications mentioned, it is added;

"Many collateral questions are discussed in these writings, which give proof of the talents and benevolence of their authors. Every one must praise their motives, whether he adopts their opinions or not. All men of mild and correct feelings will wish with them to banish forever the scourge of war. Unfortunately our hopes are not so strong as our wishes."

We feel assured that the author of the above notice had seen the writings of our countryman Dr. Worcester, who deserves so much honour for his exertions in the cause of humanity ; and to whom, more than to any other man, is to be attributed the diffusion of correct opinions and feelings on the subject of war. He is securing for himself a place among the great benefactors of mankind.

In the number for August 30, there is an eloquent and able article of considerable length in defence of the Lancastrian schools ; or as they are called, *Schools of mutual instruction*. *Les ecoles d'enseignement mutuel*. They have been attacked, it seems, under religious and political pretences, upon the ground that giving instruction to the poor may tend to withdraw them from the true faith, and to render them bad subjects. They have notwithstanding multiplied rapidly. "The oldest," it is said, "have not been more than three years in existence, and we already reckon nearly eight hundred."

Our readers, we think, will be interested in the following extracts from the article just mentioned. They may serve to show the spirit of liberal and intelligent Catholics at the present day in France.

Without instruction the poor cannot read the Bible—"And by what right will any one pretend to deny to a whole class of Christians, the reading of the Sacred Books, dictated by him who is Truth itself? And the reading of works composed to explain their meaning, and to inculcate sentiments of piety and love to God? Is it not manifest impiety to intercept the light and the consolations, which he sends? And who are deprived of these benefits? The most unfortunate. They, who, disinherited of almost all the pleasures of this life, have the most need, that they may not believe Providence unjust, to think upon another life, when we shall all be weighed in the same balance."

"In order to estimate the effects of instruction, it is necessary at the same time to consider those of ignorance.

"In many states of the South of Europe, the prejudice that it is necessary to keep the people in ignorance is sufficiently general among men in power. It cannot be denied that in these countries, the exterior forms of religion are punctually observed; nor can it be denied that as much as this was done by the Pharisees at Jerusalem. Let us not fear to avow, that if one should seek in Europe for models of the ecclesiastic virtues, he would find them indeed in these countries, but that these are not the places where he would find them in the greatest abundance. Among the common people, the idea of the Di-

vinity is almost lost in a mass of gross superstitions. The observance of religious ceremonies is often considered as affording a dispensation from performing good actions, and a privilege to commit bad. Robbers stop you on the high way, wearing rosaries. A man assassinates his enemy without any remorse of conscience. A pilgrimage or a procession will wash away the crime to-morrow. The most shameful sloth nourishes the development of every vice. Conjugal fidelity, loses respect; and there are those, who, under the shelter of a scapulary, give themselves up to the worst excesses of debauchery. If the primitive christians, whose worship was so pure, could revisit such a country, what would they think?—The spirit of Christianity includes every virtue and proscribes every vice. He is not a Christian, who is not a man of virtue.”

In the Archives of Christianity for November 1818 and January 1819, we find an account of the formation of a Protestant Bible Society at Paris.

Permission according to law was requested from the government, and granted in the most gracious manner. The President is the Marquis de Jaucourt, a peer of France, and member of the Consistory of the Reformed Communion. One of the Vice Presidents, is Cuvier, the celebrated naturalist, who is designated, as being one of the Lutheran church, and another the Count de Boissy d' Anglas.*

Sunday schools, it is stated in the same work, are forming in different parts of France.

A stereotype edition of Ostervald's translation of the New Testament is publishing at Paris.

Paley's Moral Philosophy has just appeared in a French translation, and is commended in both the journals.

England.

The Herald of Peace.—A monthly magazine under this title was commenced in January last, in London. We have seen the two first numbers, which are quite respectable and interesting. The object of the work is stated to be, “to foster

* Respecting the Bible Society, above mentioned, we have been favoured with the following information.

“The Bible Society at Paris has been established by the active exertions of Mr. Leo, a German Christian and Philanthropist, assisted by the influence of a gentleman from Boston (Mr. S. V. Wilder) resident in Paris, who, on a late visit to his native land, procured considerable aid at New-York from the funds of the American Bible Society, and also in Boston, from the Massachusetts Bible Society. Mr. Leo has not confined his attention to France, but was at the last dates, engaged in publishing an edition of the New Testament in Italy—where we may probably soon hear of the establishment of a Bible Society.”

the spirit of inquiry which has been raised by affording authentic information of the transactions of the various Peace Societies ;” “and to form a medium of correspondence between the friends of peace in various parts of this and other countries.” Agreeably to this plan, a large part of the work is occupied with articles of Intelligence, relating to the progress of pacific principles ; and among these, the exertions and publications of the Massachusetts Peace Society hold the most conspicuous place. The Constitution and annual reports of this society are introduced, together with copious extracts from the pamphlets of the Rev N. Worcester. Some of these have been republished in England for distribution, as also the Letters addressed to Gov. Strong on the subject of war, written and published in New-York, by the Rev. Dr. Whelpley.

The information contained in the Herald, of the exertions which are making, and the progress which has been effected in this excellent cause, is highly encouraging. The societies in England are well supported, and very active. Tracts to the number of 207,000 have been printed and circulated by the London Society since its foundation in 1816, besides many thousands circulated by other societies in Great Britain.

The Herald contains the addresses presented by the London Society to the Prince Regent, to the Emperor Alexander, who has returned an answer signed by his own hand, and to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. From this last paper the the following is an extract.

“Your Majesties have felt the evils of war, and have deplored its calamities. You have seen its temporary successes to be without profit and without honour. You have therefore wisely determined to oppose a barrier to its future encroachments and devastations.—And how is this barrier to be formed ?

“Will your Majesties condescend to take an example from the administration of justice in small communities ? As the maxims of jurisprudence decide between man and man, so may not the laws of a sound and Christian policy determine between contending kingdoms before the high general Tribunal of Arbiters, whom your Majesties may select for that dignified and especial office ?

“And as the estates of a kingdom are assembled from time to time, to hear complaints, and to redress wrongs, so your Majesties, by assembling in person, or by distinguished representatives, will stand as Umpires, to whom will be referred all disputes in the great Christian commonwealth ; and thus a perpetual Congress will be established to arbitrate between

contending States, and to promote the happiness of the world. For, indeed, your Majesties have been pleased to consider your own and other Christian States as only forming one great Christian Nation; to acknowledge yourselves as delegated by Providence to govern the several great branches as fathers of this one family; and to confess that in reality, there is no other Sovereign than HIM, to whom alone belongs all power, because in Him alone, are found all the treasures of love, science, and infinite wisdom."

The address of this Society to the Emperor Alexander, was presented to him by Mr. Clarkson, at Aix-la-Chapelle. Upon this gentleman's return to England, in a speech before the Woodbridge Bible Association, he gave an account of his interview with the Emperor; the latter part of which is too interesting to be omitted.

The Emperor said, "it had given him peculiar satisfaction, when he had heard of a Society, established in the United States of America, *for the Prevention of War*. This had coincided so much with his (the Emperor's) own views, and was for so great a moral purpose, that he had thought it right to signify his opinion of it to its president with his own hand. Equally happy was he now to learn, that a Society had been established in London for a similar purpose, or *for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace*. These societies were so many proofs to him of the moral improvement of the times, and of the spread of Gospel principles upon earth. He was of opinion, that the peaceable times prophesied of in the Holy Scriptures were hastening on, and that they would most assuredly come to pass. At this moment, the great struggle upon the earth between the Empire of Virtue and the Empire of Vice had been *visibly begun*. It was carrying on with vigour. The struggle would be great, and perhaps long. Vice had hitherto had a powerful dominion among men; but when he considered the progress which Christianity had made, of late years, by the institution of many estimable Societies, and the reinforcement she would receive from others, which would necessarily rise up in time, he had no doubt in his own mind, that she would triumph. 'Teach,' said his Majesty, 'the rising generation to read, and give them the Holy Scriptures, the only foundation of true morals, and you lay the axe at the root of every vicious custom. War itself, among others, must give way, wherever Christianity maintains a solid seat in the heart of man.'"

The Indo-Chinese Gleaner.—This is a quarterly publication, issued at Malacca, devoted to intelligence from China

and the neighbouring countries, and to accounts of the progress of Christian missions in India. We have just seen the fourth number, for May 1818. It is far less interesting than might have been expected; but the following extracts may not be unacceptable.

"The death warrants to be signed by his Majesty (the Emperor of China) at the autumnal execution, amount this year to nine hundred and thirty five. The share which Canton has in these is 133: but to the whole number executed in Canton during the year the word THOUSANDS, it is said, must be applied; some say *three thousand*. If the truth be equal to one thousand, it is a shockingly awful number of human beings for one province to sacrifice to the laws in the space of one year. I omit the word justice, for human laws and justice are not always the same."

We meet with the following remarkable Decree of the Emperor, dated June 20, 1817. "At the capital, the season of rain having passed, without any genial showers having fallen, the board of punishment is hereby ordered, to examine into the cases of all the criminals sentenced to the several species of transportation and lesser punishments, and *report to me distinctly what cases may be mitigated*, in the hope that nature will thereby be moved to confer the blessing of rain and preserve the harmony of the seasons. Respect this."

In the Emperor's decree, (it is remarked) "an over-ruling Providence is acknowledged, and that mercy is an attribute of Providence. Of the Being in whom that supreme control resides, their ideas are extremely obscure. When any Chinese is asked, who is to be moved by this act of clemency?—he replies, Teen Te, Heaven and Earth."

We make a few extracts also from a letter of Rev. W. Reeve, dated Bellary, Jan. 23, 1818.

"A wide and extensive field of successful labour has been opened from time to time, among the soldiers of the different European corps, that have been staying here.

"There has been for several years an English free school established in the Fort, which has already proved a great blessing, in not only providing food and raiment for some poor helpless orphans, but also in imparting to many children, English and country-born, a tolerable education; who, if they had not been brought under the fostering auspices of this friendly institution, might have been left to wretchedness and ruin. We are not without hopes, also, that the boarding school in the Mission house, may furnish useful members for society, and bright ornaments for the church of Christ.

"But what shall we say as to the poor Heathen, the more immediate objects of our labour? This may be said, much precious seed has been sown, followed with many prayers, and watered with many tears; but the harvest is not yet ripe;—fruits of A GOOD KIND do not yet appear. We are, however, not without encouragements, and great ones too. The prejudices of the heathen against the gospel become every day more and more insignificant and contemptible. The people manifest an inquiring disposition, ask many questions, come from far to receive our books, and listen apparently with a gratified attention, to all that they hear about THIS NEW WAY. We want MORE FAITH, MORE ZEAL, MORE SYMPATHY.

"We have now eight native schools, in which there are about three hundred and forty children. These children have committed catechisms, and large portions of scripture to memory, which they have from time to time repeated to us with great correctness."

The Psalter has been printed in Chinese, in the same size with the morning and evening prayers of the English church.

The third number of the Chinese Dictionary is completed and printed.

ORDINATIONS.

On Wednesday, April 14, Mr. JOHN PIERPONT was ordained pastor of the Church and Society in Hollis Street, Boston, as successor to the Rev. Mr. Holley. The introductory prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Tuckerman of Chelsea. The Sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Ware of the University, from I. Corinthians v. 18. *And all things are of God; who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.* The ordaining prayer was offered by Rev. President Kirkland; the Charge was given by Rev. Dr. Porter of Roxbury; the Right hand of Fellowship by Rev. Mr. Palfrey; and the concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Greenwood.

April 28. Mr. CHARLES BRIGGS was ordained minister of the church in Lexington. The services were introduced with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Briggs of Mansfield. The Sermon by Rev. Dr. Richmond of Dorchester, from Ephesians vi. 15. *Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.* The Ordaining prayer by Rev. President Kirkland. The Charge by Rev. Dr. Stearns of Lincoln. The Right hand of Fellowship by Rev. Mr. Field of Weston. The concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Fiske of West Cambridge.

OBITUARY.

Died at Savannah, March 7th, 1819, Mr. FRANCIS WILLIAM WINTHROP, aged 19, son of Thomas L. Winthrop, Esq. of Boston.

There are few of the dispensations of God's Providence, which are so well adapted forcibly to impress some of the most important religious truths, as the death of the young; and few which are calculated so effectually to rouse us to exertion, and to call forth all our powers in the cause of virtue, as the loss of those in whom were united high intellectual endowments, and distinguished moral excellence. When we are called to mourn the death of those, who are taken from us early in life if their life be measured by their years, but who have advanced with rapid step in the path of improvement, we feel with double force the admonition to exert every faculty, and to improve every moment allowed us; for the number of labourers is lessened, and more is dependent upon our efforts,—a more weighty responsibility rests upon our employment of that time, which, we are reminded, may be short to the youngest.

Such an admonition has been given to his friends by the death of Mr. Francis W. Winthrop, a young man of whom the highest hopes had been raised, and of whose eminence and usefulness the highest expectations were not extravagant. In his death society has experienced a loss, which, though it can hardly be fully appreciated, is not the less real and severe. Blessed with great natural powers, he had cultivated them with success, and gave evidence as well of the extent of his acquirements, as of the original force of his understanding, in the rank he sustained as a scholar at the University, in the few but excellent productions of his pen, and in familiar conversations with his friends. Though his talents were remarkable, they were not more conspicuous, than the unaffected modesty which enhanced their value, while it in some degree veiled their brilliancy. Less ambitious of praise, than of being praiseworthy, he was satisfied with the approbation of the few, and uncorrupted by the vain desire of dazzling the many. He maintained his opinions with a manly firmness, but was equally removed from presumptuous boldness, and yielding timidity. Possessing feelings of great delicacy, though without approaching a morbid sensibility, his regard to those of others was as uniform, as it was kind and attractive. Though his life was short, he lived long enough to sustain and resist some of the strongest temptations to which human virtue is exposed. Amidst the powerful seductions of vice, and the numerous facilities to error by which a young man's strength of principle is tried in a collegiate life, his integrity was not merely uncorrupted but confirmed; his purity was not only unsullied, but became constantly brighter. When he was suffering under the pains of disease and the rapid failure of his bodily strength, his patience and unrepining resignation were such as could have arisen from no other principle than an ardent piety, and firm reliance on the goodness of God. By such qualities it was that he acquired and preserved the esteem and respect of all who knew him, and the most devoted attachment of his particular associates. By the strong powers of his understanding, and the delicacy and purity of his mind, by his deference to others mingled with a just confidence in himself, by his high standard of moral excellence, and the warmth of his piety, he was in a peculiar manner fitted for the profession of Divinity, which he had adopted with deliberation, and would have pursued with ardour, had his life been prolonged. But while the hopes of his friends and the expectations of society are thus mournfully disappointed, our grief for his loss is mingled with gratitude for his life and example, and softened by our confident assurance, that he is raised to a higher sphere of action and of usefulness; that he will still enjoy the merciful protection, and the approving smile of his God and Father.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Young Preacher's Manual; or a Collection of Treatises on preaching—comprising Brown's Address to Students in Divinity, Lenclos's Dialogues on the Eloquence of the pulpit, Claude's Essay on the composition of a sermon, abridged, Gregory on the composition and delivery of a sermon, Reybaz on the art of preaching—with a list of books. Revised by Ebenezer Porter, D.D. Bartlet Professor, Andover. Boston, Charles F. Wer.

Nine Sermons preached at Plattsburgh, N. Y. By the Rev. William R. Weeks, A. M. 2d edition.

The Trial. Calvin and Hopkins *versus* the Bible and common sense. By a Lover of truth. 2d edition, enlarged. To which are added some remarks on the Andover Institution.

A Series of Letters on the mode and subjects of Baptism, addressed to the Christian Public: to which is prefixed a brief account of the commencement and progress of the author's trial on those points, which terminated in his embracing believers' baptism. By Stephen Chapin, late pas or of the congregational Church in Mount Vernon, N. H. Boston, Lincoln & Edmands.

A Statement of the proceedings in the First Church and parish in Dedham respecting the settlement of a minister; 1818. With some considerations on congregational Church polity. By a member of said Church and Parish.

A Course of Lectures, containing a description and systematic arrangement of the several branches of Divinity; accompanied with an account both of the principal authors, and of the progress which has been made at different periods in Theological Learning. By Herbert Marsh, D.D. F.R.S. Margaret Professor of Divinity.—Part IV. On the Interpretation of Prophecy. Boston, Cummings & Hilliard.

A Humble attempt to reconcile the differences of Christians respecting the extent of the Atonement. By Edward D. Griffin, D. D. New-York.

A Sermon on Robbery, Piracy, and Murder; in which Duelling and Suicide are particularly considered. Preached after the execution of the four pirates. By T. Baldwin, D. D.

An Appeal to the public with respect to the unlawfulness of Divorces, pleaded before the Consociation of New Haven, Dec. 5, 1785. By Benjamin Trumbull, D. D. 2d edition.

The History of the Jews from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the present time, by Hannah Adams, of Boston, America, has been reprinted at London in a handsome octavo volume.

☞ We acknowledge an interesting communication from *A friend to peace in church and state*, which shall receive attention.

Osmyn has also been received.

☞ A gentleman, whose name is left with our publishers, Messrs. WELLS & LILLY, is very desirous of obtaining the loan of a volume of the *Critical Review*, published, he thinks, between the years 1804 and 1810, containing, among the Foreign Articles, a review of *Paulus' Commentary on the New-Testament*.

THE
CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 71.

NEW SERIES—No. 3.

For May and June, 1819.

A GLANCE AT THE HISTORY OF OPINIONS CONCERNING THE
CREATION AND FALL OF MAN.

No. II.

IN our first number we confined ourselves to the speculations, which have been formed in successive ages, on the Mosaic account of the *Creation* of the first human pair in the garden of Eden. We propose in this to follow the course of opinion respecting their *Fall*; observing the same historical arrangement as before, and endeavouring to preserve the two parts of our essay as distinct from each other as we can. They have, however, so close a connexion and so many mutual relations, that it will be necessary to bear in mind what has been already stated; and we cannot promise entirely to avoid repetition. It is evident that there must uniformly be a correspondence between the sentiments, which any writer has entertained on the two points under view. They who held the highest notions of the original image of God, and of the paradisiacal state, would of course form the highest estimate of the consequences of the first transgression: and so in the reverse. Adam could not lose more than he possessed; and the mischiefs of his fall must be commensurate with the distinctions and privileges which he forfeited.—Under these circumstances, it may appear to some that we had better have combined our subjects in a single view; and, since the same denominations occur as belonging to the disputants on both, have observed no other classification than that, which they once for all would point out. In so doing, however, we should have been obliged to sacrifice

much in perspicuity : and this could be but ill afforded in giving an epitome of subtle and contending opinions. We wish to present each point in dispute as simple and distinct as is possible : for in labouring to be short, there is danger of becoming obscure ; and we are aware that a topic, which has been much agitated and contested, is as naturally involved in something of confusion, as the blinding dust rises with the wind, or an embattled field will be overhung with the smoke of its own affray.

We have first to look at the narrative, which Moses himself has written, or perhaps quoted, of the temptation by the serpent, the disobedience of our first parents, and the effects of their fall ; and to examine the different principles of interpretation, which have been applied to it. Some have been contented to rest in its literal import, and suppose it to be a plain narrative of facts just as they happened : some have maintained it to be a true history poetically embellished : and some have regarded it as entirely a fiction of poesy. It has been treated by many as a mythos or apologue, either philosophical, or political, or moral. Others have attempted to illustrate it on the idea that the account was originally transmitted in hieroglyphical characters ; which were undoubtedly the first that were employed in writing, and long preceded the formation of any alphabet. These characters presented the figures of a tree, a serpent, and a woman ; which were transferred, as they will have it, from the picture to the story that composes the third chapter of Genesis.—Whatever theory we adopt concerning its origin, still the story itself contains some leading thoughts that cannot be mistaken ; and there is scarcely room for controversy respecting its main design. It is evidently intended to bear upon that great problem, which in every succeeding age has been a theme of perplexed and anxious discussion,—the origin of evil. Attention must have been called, even in the earliest ages of the world, to the physical and moral ills, with which it abounds ; and inquiry must have been excited as to the cause of so much iniquity and woe. We here have it referred to the disobedience and punishment of the parents of our race ; which was certainly the most simple and natural explanation that could have been devised ; and one that commended itself to the universal wish of finding in the primeval generations of man, a period, however short, of an innocence and a bliss, which the earth in its present state no where presents or allows. This little history, or whatever else any may wish to call it, carries with it the idea, that sin is the transgression of a law expressly given by God (v. 3) ; that it is detestable, as the description of the

tempter shows ; that it is shameful (v. 7) ; and that, whatever the temptation, it deserves the severest punishment (v. 16, 17). The idea of divine justice also cannot but be recognized ; according to which, natural evil is visited upon mankind in retribution for their offences. The manner in which it describes the seduction of Adam and Eve, may pass for a just and not inelegant representation of the manner in which evil propensities commonly mislead. The guilty possessors of paradise are driven from it into the open and thorny world : but nothing is said of the divine image being lost ; nothing to induce the supposition that we are born more frail than our great progenitor. The origin of evil is traced to the wiliness of an adversary, who was from the beginning : not a word is dropped implying any transmission of the consequences of the fall of Adam to his unborn posterity.

We pointed out several instances, in which the Mosaic account of man's *creation* was referred to in the Jewish scriptures : but there is not one, in which is the most distant allusion to his *fall*. We may read from Job, the oldest, to Daniel the youngest of them all, and shall find nothing that can fairly be claimed as recognizing the relation in Genesis of the loss of Paradise. Remarks on the tendency of man to do evil, on the universality of sin, and strength of irregular passions, (1 Kings viii. 46. Proverbs xx. 9. Eccles. vii. 20. Ps. li. 5. and xiv. 2, 3.) cannot certainly be construed into any such reference. Such reflections are true on any system ; and would have been made, had the whole history of the world before the flood been obliterated even to the last trace of record or tradition.

On leaving the canon of the Old Testament, we come to Jesus the son of Sirac ; whose admirable book called Ecclesiasticus is contained in the Apocrypha, and was composed somewhat more than a century before the birth of our Saviour. He mentions explicitly, though incidentally, the circumstance of the fall ; (xxv. 24.) "of the woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die." He maintains, however, with the whole ancient scriptures, that all are free to will and to choose ; and that sin arises from the abuse of this freedom. His doctrine is entirely that of the apostle James, who tells us that "God tempteth no man," neither is any malevolent being the agent of temptation, but that "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away and enticed by his own lusts." His language is very strong and not to be misunderstood : "say not thou, It is through the Lord that I fell away : for thou oughtest not to do the things that he hateth. He himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his counsel. If thou wilt,

thou shalt keep the commandments, and perform acceptable faithfulness. He hath set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thy hand unto whether thou wilt." Here no *moral* difference is acknowledged between Adam and his posterity: man is made as he was "from the beginning." With respect to the influence of the evil principle, his words are very remarkable: "when the ungodly curseth SATAN, he curseth HIS OWN SOUL." (xxi: 27.) In the apocryphal book called the Wisdom of Solomon, written by some Platonizing Jew, of considerably later but uncertain date, we find the following passage, ii. 23, 24. "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world; and *they that do hold of his side do find it.*" A spiritual life and death, however, seems here to be spoken of, in contradistinction to a natural one. This appears evident from the last clause, and is confirmed by the whole context. Still the Jews who lived near the time of our Saviour, distinctly taught, that, on account of Adam's transgression, the sentence of temporal death passed on all, even the holiest.*—Philo of Alexandria, a contemporary with the apostles, next claims attention. He received and explained the narrative in the third chapter of Genesis, as allegorically and historically, though not literally true. Even his historical exposition is in fact but little removed from an allegorical one. Figuratively, Paradise is, according to him, virtue and the moral nature of man; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, is prudence and understanding; the tree of life is the fear of God; the serpent is evil desire; the man is the intellectual, and the woman the sensual part of our nature. Through these leading points we may easily trace the outlines of his theory. This philosopher taught, that all men are by nature wicked; that sin is handed down from generation to generation; that it is impossible by the utmost exertions, and the highest advances in goodness, to free ourselves wholly from this tendency of our nature; that man sins, not through the influence of sense, but through appetite and passion, although these would not invade were not the soul imprisoned in the flesh; and finally, that God is not to be charged with the blame of this evil propension, and has imparted to every one of his rational creatures the capacity of being virtuous.

The New Testament is now opened to us; and our inquiries turn toward the teaching of Jesus and his apostles. And here a difficulty meets us. We cannot attempt to define what their teaching is, without seeming to prejudge the whole controversy,

* For authorities Wetstein may be consulted, ad Rom. v. 12—14.

of which we have to treat. It is easy to decide what the son of Sirac and Philo, what Pelagius and Augustin meant; but when we approach the sacred records, we are immediately engaged in interpreting the decision of those, whom all acknowledge to be authorized arbiters. But for the very reason that they have been so much appealed to, we cannot pass them over: and the few words which we have to offer, we shall advance the more confidently, as it is far from our intention to dogmatize. The doctrine of the New Testament certainly is, that we are frail beings, and prone to offend; that no one is or can be absolutely perfect; but still, that the sins of each individual arise from his own heart, from the abuse of his free-will, and are therefore on his own head. Direct references to the subject of the first transgression are not very frequent. There is a passage in the first epistle to Timothy, (ii. 13, 14, 15) relating to the seduction of Eve; but it has no doctrinal bearing, and contains not so much an argument, as an illustration in the Jewish manner. Besides this, there are three conspicuous texts, that are often quoted and require particular notice. The first is in John, viii, 44; and presents us with the declaration of our Lord himself: "ye are of your father the devil, and he was a *murderer* from the beginning." But if we consider the occasion on which it was spoken, to those who sought his life; we may conclude that he had not in his mind the introduction of death by sin, which would have been irrelevant, but the perpetration of the first murder, which was prompted by the most diabolical passions. The second example is in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, xv. 21, 22. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as *in Adam all die*, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Many understand by this transmitted death, only the inheritance of an earthly, animal and corruptible frame: and according to the authorities collected by Schleusner, we might translate the latter clause: as *like Adam all die*, even so *like Christ*,* &c. The other passage is in Romans, v, 12—19. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," &c. The verses are too many to be quoted, and too familiar to our readers to make that necessary. Perhaps it would not be easy to prove any thing more from them than this, that sin superadds to bodies previously mortal, another cooperating principle of decay; both causing *preternatural* death, and aggravating dissolution by the sting which it adds to it.† However this may be, we will offer but one remark:—it is acknowledged even by Mr. Pyle in his Paraphrase, though he believed the universal mortality of mankind

* See Lexicon, art. *ev* § 26.

† Simpson's Essays.

to be the consequence of "the fall," that the apostle is here reasoning with the Jews upon their own principles ; and that his argument is what logicians call "ad hominem." In that case, it is evident that nothing can be inferred respecting his own private opinion.

The fathers of the church now begin their order. In the first periods of christianity, there prevailed a diversity of opinion respecting the consequences of Adam's transgression, analogous to that which has already been mentioned concerning his original state. But it was a diversity, that attracted little attention, and stirred up no disputes. Each followed his own convictions with freedom, and in peace. In certain points, however, there was a perfect accordance ; and it is remarkable that they were those, which were in direct opposition to the theory, that afterwards gained the ascendancy under the name and influence of St. Augustin. The opinions of the fathers on this subject were connected with those, which they entertained of the origin of the soul. The Gnostics, it is well known, held that matter, and of course the human body, was wicked, and the source of all wickedness : and many of the fathers agreed with them, at least so far as to maintain, that since the time of Adam the frame of man was so constituted, as to excite him perpetually and vehemently to evil. To this cause of corruption, they added the agency of malignant spirits. Still, with respect to every individual, they traced the absolute source of bad deeds to his acknowledged *free-will*. This was the case with Justin Martyr, though he professes strongly his faith, that the corruption of mankind is universal. Irenæus deduces our mortality from Adam's disobedience, and even advances the position that in him all have sinned ; but he says not a word of any hereditary depravity, and even acknowledges a perpetual freedom in the human will. Clement of Alexandria declares the same with great precision and force : he goes so far as to remonstrate against those interpretations of some passages in Scripture, according to which sin is something born with us, and independent of any volition of ours. Origen supposed, with the Platonists, that our souls had transgressed in a preexistent state, and are imprisoned in these bodies by way of punishment. According to him, the history of the fall is only a description of every man's experience ; the transmission of sin is chiefly the result of education ; and the animal frame is but an incidental cause of moral evil. In Tertullian, so early as the second century, there appear some hints of original sin ; but they are slight, and accompanied by the most express recognition of human freedom. It is now indeed, universally conceded, that all the ancient fathers taught this last great doctrine. Innume-

rable passages might be selected from Gregory, Eusebius, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Basil, Epiphanius, Cyril and John of Jerusalem, and others, in proof that they ascribe to our nature since the fall—great corruption indeed, but great distinctions also, and particularly that of moral freedom. Nay, it is notorious that this was the view of Augustin himself, before the arguments of his opponent forced him to be consistent, and true to his system, and he became heated by controversy. If those writers sometimes *seem* to refer to the imputation of Adam's guilt to his descendants, they probably meant no more than to describe the sad consequences which that event had produced, particularly in the introduction of death into the world: and even that consequence was denied by Titus, bishop of Bostra; who, a little before the public appearance of Pelagius, had taught that death was not the effect of sin, but a natural event. We have said thus much on the topic of free will, as held by the early christian writers, because of its extreme importance in the question before us. The doctrine of original sin, if followed out in its true and inevitable bearings, is fatalism. The alternative Augustin was obliged to see, and ventured to brave: but some doubts of his infallibility must have crossed his mind, when he read himself in a former controversy speaking thus: "no man is wise, valiant, or temperate, with the wisdom, valour, or temperance of another, or righteous with the righteousness of another:" nor, by parity of reasoning, the reverse.*

We have now reached a great epoch in the history, which we have undertaken to sketch. In the beginning of the fifth century arose Pelagius, an ingenious, learned and upright monk of Britain. He, with his friend Caelestius, taught in the boldest and most explicit manner, that mankind are still in the same state, in which Adam was originally placed by his creator;—that Adam's transgression injured nobody but himself;—that no change has taken place in our nature in consequence of the fall;—that death is no punishment of sin, but like all the other evils of life, entered into the primeval appointment of Providence;—that *in no sense* can Adam's offence have been *imputed* to his posterity; that there is no such thing as original sin;—that by our nature we are made capable of knowing, desiring, and executing good or evil;—and finally, that the opposite opinions contradict the freedom of man, and the righteousness of his Maker. He was assailed by Jerom, and especially by Augustin; and the following positions were set up against him:—the nature of man, originally good, is through the fall totally depraved, and so descends through all generations: no man can by nature do good,

* Priestley's History of the Corruptions of Christianity, Part 3d § 1.

but evil only : this total depravation is a positive judgment of God for Adam's guilt, and visited alike on him and on all his posterity : beside this infliction, there is consequent that of death, and of all our woe : original sin is transmitted by natural descent, and consists in evil desire : children are subjected to it and to its doom, and will be damned if they die before baptism :—this whole doctrine must be received, in order to justify against all objections the work of Christ's redemption. It is certain that on both sides was taught what had never been precisely and systematically taught before ; but we cannot stop to inquire what the steps of the process were. The result of the controversy is declared, when we are told it was between *Saint Augustin* and *Pelagius*. The latter was no bishop, and had nothing to redeem him but his reasoning, which went for nothing, from the opprobrious name of heresiarch. But ecclesiastical history teaches us to value at very little the honours of canonization. They who are acquainted with the lives of *Julian* and of his opponent *Cyril*, will find less difference than they might have expected between the apostate and the saint ; and that difference on the wrong side.* The theses of *Augustin* were triumphant in the African and Western churches ; and those of *Pelagius* were denounced as heretical in several synods, especially at *Rome* and *Carthage*, A. D. 418. Still the last had their defenders, and the victory cost a hard struggle. In the eastern churches, the ideas of the earlier fathers were yet embraced, indefinite and contradictory as they were ; and *Pelagianism* could boast of more adherents than the opposite theory, notwithstanding its condemnation at the council of *Ephesus*. The truth was, that in the east less attention was given to these controverted points ; and they were not thought of consequence enough to be very nicely defined or stoutly contested. As a proof of this it may be mentioned, that *John of Damascus*, who in the eighth century described the orthodox belief of the Greek churches before and during his own time, in order to vindicate it against heretics, † scarcely alludes to the doctrine of original sin ; and seems to speculate widely from the hypothesis of of the “divine” bishop of *Hippo*.

In the midst of his success, *Augustin* was disturbed by mortifying intelligence from *France*. Some monks of *Marseilles* had begun to teach, that God bestows on all men the gifts of understanding and freedom of will ; by which they are able to distinguish between good and evil, to choose and commence within themselves the good part, and thus to obtain the aids of

* See *Jortin's Remarks*, vol. 3d. pp. 10—15., and 106 and 7.

† *De fide orthodoxa*, 2, 30. 3, 1.

grace : and they boldly declared the Augustinian tenets to be immoral and profane. The first distinguished champion of this party was Cassian, who was followed by Faustus, Vincentius, and Gennadius : and these may be considered as the leaders of the *Semipelagian* sect. According to them, temporal death is the only consequence of Adam's transgression which is visited on his race : we are saved by grace alone, through the death of Christ and the ordinance of baptism ; but still there is first demanded on our part, faith and a good disposition, through which the Almighty will be moved to exalt our faith still higher, and to give it the power to go forth into good works : the loss of faith is dependent as absolutely on our free-will as its commencement is. These midway opinions soon became very popular, though strenuous exertions were made against their progress. They triumphed even in synods ; spread themselves not only in France, but over the whole west ; and even insinuated themselves under the name of Augustin himself. This last fact is very remarkable, though by no means singular. It is one of many examples to show, how easily any form of words may be bent to what we wish it ; how a master may be nominally followed, while his doctrines are forsaken ; and how good sense will gradually get the better of a system, though professed and revered still. A philosopher of the Hindoos has lately assured us, that the Vedas, their sacred books, do not inculcate idolatry, but rather teach the unity of God : and there are many Mohammedan doctors, who maintain that there is nothing of fatalism in the Koran.

The Schoolmen almost universally leaned more toward the side of Pelagius than of Augustin ; and though they appealed to the latter, and professed and wished to defend his dogmas, it was no longer the true *orthodox* faith that they recommended. Original sin they made to consist, now in the want of any preternatural quality, by which our nature might remain wholly uncontaminated ; now in a carnality, not in itself wicked, but containing the germ of wickedness ; now in the imputation, not of Adam's sin, but only of his punishment ;—and this punishment, too, the dissolution of the body, not the condemnation of the soul :—and now again they described it as hereditary guilt, but by no means so strongly as Augustin represented it. Some of them even declared, that man was capable of *deserving* the aids of divine grace, and with their help of performing *meritorious* actions.

The era of the Reformation now claims our notice. Luther took so great offence at the catholic notion of meritorious good works, that he again set up the old doctrines of faith alone and the merits of Christ, as the grounds of acceptance ;

and came back to the old opinion, in all its darkness, of the total incapacity of man to do good. This miserable fantasy he plainly avowed in his book "*de servo arbitrio*;" which he wrote in opposition to a work of Erasmus, entitled "*de libero arbitrio*." Melancthon also was at first an advocate for predestination; but he afterwards retracted his opinion. In the Augsburg confession,* which was composed by this mildest and best of the reformers, it is decided, that man's will is free, but *not in spiritual things*; that he is born full of bad inclinations, and has in himself no true faith, no true fear of God. In a subsequent edition, however, he added something of qualification, which produced no small outcry.—In the articles drawn up at Smalcald, the expressions concerning original sin were, as may easily be accounted for, still stronger: more errors were exploded, and their melancholy consequences more terrifically portrayed. In the very first of them we read: This hereditary guilt is so deep and leprous a corruption of nature, as to be *incomprehensible* by human reason, and understood only by revelation, &c. &c. Luther always remained firm to the theory of Augustin. Melancthon in some respects dissented from it: and there arose a violent contest between their respective partizans. The doctrine of Luther naturally became more and more extravagant in the hands of those, who were determined to uphold it all; till at last Flacius declared that original sin was *the very substance of man*.

John Calvin of Geneva claims the next place in our review; who was as conspicuous for his adherence to the sternest form of Augustinism, as his own followers have since been, for their zeal in behalf of his more systematical tenets. His doctrine was, that the will *necessarily* willed evil; but was still *a will*, aye, and that *a free will*: with this he connected the belief of *an absolute predestination*.† His doctrine of imputation, was strenuously combated long afterward, by Dr. Whitby; ‡ who acknowledged no other effect from the fall than mortality, and the attendant dread of death. In Switzerland, Zuinglius, the celebrated reformer, inculcated much milder opinions on these subjects than those of Calvin: and in the Catholic churches, the ideas of the effects of the fall were continually softening, and the diversity of sentiments respecting it created but little attention. Albert Pighi, a Catholic, attempted to revive the opi-

* See Article 18.

† *Institutiones relig. Christ. Lib. II. cap. 2.*

‡ "Discourse concerning the five points. London 1710." "A Discourse concerning the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness, or obedience to the law, to us, for righteousness or justification," appears as an appendix to the quarto edition of his Commentary.

nion, that original sin consisted in no moral defect or corruption ; but only in blame and punishment, transmitted through all generations, from Adam, the representative and head of mankind. It found many advocates, protestants as well as papists ; but was condemned at the council of Trent. That Synod, however, purposely avoided defining very accurately their doctrine, in order to leave room enough for the meritoriousness of good works.

The Socinians, it is evident from what has been said, were not the first who totally denied every thing under the name of original sin : but they were the first, who attacked the whole hitherto received doctrine with every variety of arguments from reason and the scriptures. The Arminians, or Remonstrants, only assailed the theory of imputation ; and reduced somewhat lower, that of man's native moral corruption. Having mentioned these, we need go no further. The opinions of the two succeeding centuries, so far as they are systematic, or claim to be founded on the sacred scriptures, belong to some of the classes just described. None have been able to surpass the Genevan father in extravagance ; and none could outdo on the other side—we will not say the other extreme—the Polish fraternity. Let every man judge for himself.

We have thus laid before our readers what we intended, on a subject, the decision of which is very important—not to our faith, nor our virtue, nor our happiness—but to our speculative scheme of divinity ; which is of infinitely less consequence. We have been led, perhaps, to swerve from our original purpose of remaining neutral ; but trusting that we have been candid and honest, we will not regret this deviation ; and for two obvious reasons : we were conscious of no motive to forbid, and we did not well know how to avoid it.

EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

To the Editor of the Christian Disciple.

SIR,—It is greatly to be regretted, that Expository Preaching has almost ceased among us. The number is very great of those, who are indebted for almost the whole of their knowledge of revealed religion, to the exercises of the pulpit ; and it is an inquiry which demands the solemn attention of christian ministers, whether they have adopted the best method of dispensing religious instruction. The number is indeed great also of those who study their bibles, and other books which are designed to illustrate and to enforce the doctrines and duties of

the word of God. But very few, even of these, obtain much of that information, which is familiar to an inquisitive and a studious clergyman, and which he feels to be of the greatest importance in the illustration of the doctrines and duties of our religion. The method most common with clergymen is, to give in their sermons the results of their studies, without noticing the facts, or the processes, which have led them to these results. Nor would I, by any means, reject this mode of preaching. Let what are called sermons, still hold a conspicuous place in the public exercises of the sabbath. But if it be a great purpose of the christian ministry, to aid men in forming right conceptions of the religion of the bible ; to aid them in understanding each of the dispensations of God in this sacred book ; and particularly in understanding our Saviour and his apostles, as they were understood by those whom they immediately addressed ; the duty of *expository* preaching becomes imperious. My object is, to direct the attention of christian ministers to this very important subject. And could the Christian Disciple, Sir, become the means of reviving this custom among us, it would produce, I think, the happiest revival of religion : not indeed a religious excitement of the passions, not an inflamed zeal without knowledge, but an increased interest in religious truth, arising from a stronger and clearer discernment of it, and an increased interest in christian duty, resulting from deeper convictions of its importance, and the engagement of all the faculties of the mind, as well as the affections, in its service.

One advantage which will result from expository preaching, is, that it will enable the great body, both of preachers and of hearers, better to understand the true character and import of our Saviour's teaching.

Our Lord's teaching was very peculiar, not only in the character of his doctrines and precepts, but in the manner in which he presented or inculcated them. It is not less an excellence than a peculiarity of the New Testament, that *all the instructions of our Lord and his apostles were suggested by the characters and wants of those to whom they were addressed ; and by particular circumstances of the time, which must be known and considered, in order to understand their instructions.* I would not imply, that our Lord and his apostles taught without method. But it was a method altogether distinct from that of system makers. It was a method designed for making, not Calvinists, nor Arminians, nor Methodists, nor Baptists ; but simply *Christians*. The manner in which our Lord taught, has been too little regarded by the teachers of his religion. Certain texts, and certain subjects of prominent importance in their systems, have been made the burden of their preaching ; and

very much that is most strikingly illustrative, not only of the person and offices of our Saviour, but of other doctrines and most important duties of his religion, is wholly, or almost utterly neglected. This is a great cause of the inadequate, and unjust conceptions of christianity, which so widely prevail, and with which men are so easily satisfied.

Many have appeared to think that they could make the word of God better than he has made it ; or at least, that they could put it in better order than he has assigned to it. But why have not the evangelists and apostles given a regular system of christian theology and duties ? I answer, for the very important reason, that neither our Lord nor his apostles *taught* in this manner. Is it asked, why they did not so teach ? I answer, because they *better knew what was in man* ; and what man required, to be made *wise unto salvation*. Let any man of good, but common understanding, take for his guide in faith and conduct, either of the systems which sectarians have made, and let him study it as a good man should study his bible ; and think you that he will obtain the clear, and strong, and just conceptions of christian truth and duty, which the bible alone could give him ? Of all the books ever written by man, whatever has been the perfection of their order, the force of their reasoning, the felicity of their illustrations, the clearness and strength of their expressions, and the eloquence of their appeals to the heart and conscience, no one may for a moment be compared in effect, with the simple and artless narratives of the evangelists. Where is the man, even of very common powers of comprehension, who diligently and seriously reads the New Testament, who may not, without hesitation, and most satisfactorily, answer the inquiries, who is Jesus Christ ? From whence did he derive his wisdom and power ? How is man to be redeemed from iniquity ? How should a christian feel and act in any given circumstances ?—At least, he could answer these inquiries in the language of the New Testament. And should not this satisfy any one ? No, says the system maker. Give me the meaning of these expressions, that I may ascertain whether you understand them aright. And what does he mean by understanding them aright ? Is it any thing else than understanding them in accordance with the technics of a party ? We read in systems, of a *trinity of persons in the Godhead* ; of a *vicarious sacrifice for sin* ; of our Lord's having been *punished* for the sins of men ; of *satisfaction made to the divine justice* ; and a belief of these is called a belief of christianity. If a man should say, I believe that *there is one God, and that there is none other than He* ; I believe that *Jesus is the Son of God* ; that he was *sent by his Father* into the world ; that he *spoke the words, and did*

the works of his Father ; that he finished the work which was given him to do ; that he died, the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God ; that he suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should walk in his steps ; and that he died for us, that they which live, might not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again ; he might be, and he would be by many, accounted very defective in his faith, on these great articles of the gospel. Or should a christian minister attempt to illustrate any of these great doctrines of the gospel, without employing any sectarian phraseologies ; and in terminating his public prayers, should he use only scriptural doxologies ; he would be heard by many with suspicion, and perhaps be condemned as heretical. These are evils which, I think, arise principally from studying christianity in the systems of men, and not in the bible ; and from ignorance, or disregard of the circumstances, in which our Lord and his apostles delivered their instructions. Now expository preaching, if it were conducted as it should be, would be one of the most effectual means of correcting these abuses ; and of enlarging the charity of men, by enlarging their knowledge of our religion.

Nor let it be thought that this mode of preaching will be easier to ministers, and require less of their time, than the preparation of sermons. It may indeed be so practised, as to require but little preparation. But little to be envied is that minister of Jesus Christ,—deeply indeed is he to be pitied,—who, with little thought, or care, or interest, engages in this important part of the service of his master. To expound the scriptures as they should be expounded, will require the most diligent and patient research ; the most careful comparison ; and the most cautious inferences. It will require not only a full and exact knowledge of the scriptures, but of contemporary history, and particularly of Jewish antiquities. In this exercise indeed, a christian minister may make all his knowledge conducive to the religious improvement of those to whom he ministers. Many clergymen, if they would adopt the practice of regular exposition, would be themselves greatly instructed by it. The desire of being able and useful expositors, would lead them to courses of study now too much neglected ; and the enlarged knowledge of the circumstances connected with the instructions given by our Saviour and his apostles, which would be thus communicated to hearers, would prepare them to receive with far greater advantage, the impressions designed to be made by sermons.

Let it not be objected, that a large portion of hearers are not, by their education, prepared to receive this knowledge.

This would be true of criticisms upon language, or of metaphysical discussions. But it is not true of the history of the times, in which the events recorded in the scriptures occurred ; of the character, manners and customs of the nations of which we read in the scriptures ; of the prevailing sentiments and practices alluded to by the sacred writers. This is knowledge, without which the scriptures cannot be well understood ; which clergymen should possess, and should impart also to their hearers, and which they will be interested to receive. But this knowledge can be but partially communicated in sermons. In expositions, it may be given with that frequency and fulness, which will not fail, even in very common minds, of exciting attention, and of enlarging their comprehension of the scriptures. Every christian minister of any activity of mind, of any earnestness in seeking for professional improvement, is greatly interested in every circumstance he learns, which illustrates one expression of our Lord, or of his apostles. Should he not endeavour to excite this interest in others ? And should he not, where it is felt, do what he can for its gratification ?

Another advantage resulting from a course of expositions of scripture is, that hearers, having previous knowledge of the part of the divine word which is to engage their attention, have an opportunity of examining it ; and of bringing to the church some preparation of mind, to receive the instructions to be given by the preacher.

Almost every lecturer in any of the branches of philosophy, at the close of each discourse, intimates, or states explicitly, the subject of his next lecture. His pupils, or hearers, have thus an opportunity of reading, or at least, of thinking upon the subject ; and if they have availed themselves of it, we cannot doubt that they will hear him with greatly increased advantage, and proportionably greater interest. I do not believe that the ignorance of our congregations, with respect to the subjects to be treated on the next sabbath, in any measure makes the day more welcome, or excites any greater desire of attendance on its public services. On the contrary, I am persuaded, that, if at the close of each sabbath, the subjects for the next Lord's day should be distinctly stated, they would be often in the thoughts of the greatest part of the hearers, and by many would be carefully studied. They would form links of association with the coming sabbath, which would greatly increase the interest of its anticipation, and the enjoyment of its public exercises. They would do often more for securing the piety and virtue of the week, than is perhaps effected even by discourses, which for a time have made a strong and salutary impression. But the subjects of *sermons* can seldom be so

announced. The common discourses of the pulpit, and perhaps the most useful, grow out of the intercourse of each week. But in a regular course of expositions, notice may be given of the passages of scripture to be considered. And will this fail of leading many to a more careful and frequent examination of the scriptures?

This suggests another advantage of expository preaching.

It must certainly be desirable to every clergyman, to excite in his hearers the strongest disposition to study the scriptures. Very earnest appeals are made in sermons, on the importance of this duty ; on the interest and worth of the knowledge to be thus obtained ; on the comparative worthlessness of all other knowledge ; and on the awful condition of a soul appearing before God, ignorant of that word by which he is to be judged, and by which he might have been sanctified, and prepared for heaven. And very excellent rules are given in sermons to assist us in understanding the scriptures, and imbibing as we read them, the holy spirit which they inculcate. But clergymen have to lament the inefficiency of their best sermons on these subjects. Few can distinctly retain in their memories a set of rules thus given for reading the bible ; and still fewer will long retain a deep impression of one or two sermons, designed to fix their attention on the word of God. But in giving expositions of scripture, these rules may frequently be repeated, and as often illustrated by examples. They will thus be applied in circumstances most favorable to their impression on the memory. Hearers too, when they come from church, instead of resorting to their bibles to examine a verse, the text of a sermon, will examine a passage of several verses, and perhaps a chapter. And this is not all. They will perceive, perhaps as they did not before, the import of a whole conversation, or discourse of our Lord ; or of a whole subject in an epistle of the New Testament. Besides, being taught in this way to read the scriptures with careful attention to the circumstances in which any precept, or warning, or promise is given, the bible will become to very many a new book ; a book, not only now and then to engage attention for a few moments, but to be *studied* ; not to be read only on the sabbath, from an imperious and perhaps painful sense of duty, and remembered only in single and detached verses, but as the chosen employment of leisure hours ; and chosen because loved.

It is to be lamented that the bible should be read only by chapters, and with such considerable intervals even between the reading of chapters. Very many know not how modern is the division of the bible into chapters and verses, and probably regard this division with some of the reverence which they feel

for the sacred books themselves. But every attentive reader of the scriptures has felt how injudiciously, in some instances, this division has been made; and every christian minister now knows, or should know, how much more advantageously for the understanding of the bible, it might be separated into sections. In expository preaching, such sections might be formed. And it would often be greatly useful to hearers, to be taught the connexion of parts, which have been disjoined by our present division into chapters and verses.

It is a question demanding the serious attention of ministers, how far the practice which prevails of preaching only sermons from single texts, has a tendency to make men satisfied with single texts, in their views of divine truth; and how far it has a tendency to repress, rather than to encourage, the careful reading of the scriptures.

I am aware that many ministers, by their great care in the selection, and the attention they bestow on the connexions, of their texts; and by the minuteness with which they exhibit these connexions; do in fact make many of their sermons, to a considerable extent, expository. And I would ask those who have been accustomed to this manner of treating their texts, if any part of their sermons has been heard with more attention, or with more interest than this, in which they have endeavoured to give the true import of the divine word? The last appeal is always to the word of God; and if the doctrine or duty, which is the subject of discourse, be clearly taught in the scriptures, it will generally be received with confidence and submission. The attention with which these expositions are heard, indicates the interest and advantage, with which the portion of scripture so explained will be afterwards read by hearers; and the great benefits they might derive from a regular course of them.

I have heard of a clergyman who, when dying, recurred to it as one of the happiest circumstances of his ministry, that in his sermons he had never used any part of scripture to prove or to enforce any thing, for which he did not believe that it was designed by its author;—that he had never given a meaning to any part of scripture, which he did not at the time think was the meaning intended to be conveyed by it. This may appear to some to be a peculiar circumstance of self-congratulation. But let him who is without offence in his citations from the word of God, cast the first stone!

Sometimes texts are nothing more than mottos. There is no direct reference to them throughout the sermon. The discourse is written upon a subject, without reference to a text; and a text is afterwards added in compliance with custom. Admit that sermons of this sort should be preached; that they

give scope to observation and to appeal, to which merely expository discourses are far less favourable. But this surely is not the only way in which ministers should preach. It is not the kind of preaching best suited to lead men to the study of the scriptures. It fixes attention on no particular part of the bible; and few hearers, to satisfy themselves of the propriety, or incorrectness of any views which have been so presented, will search the word of God, that they may learn whether or not these things are so.

It is the corner stone of Protestantism, that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice. How then can ministers so strengthen the cause of protestantism, as by leading men to the study of the bible? Different sects of christians lecture upon the creeds received in their churches; and by this means, essentially, have human creeds retained their authority; and in many places have been better understood, and more readily applied as a test of truth, than the bible. *Fas est ab ullis doceri.* If ministers would have the scriptures to be the last resort on all questions of christian doctrines and duties, let them lecture upon the scriptures.

Dr. Lathrop of West Springfield has been, and is, one of the most popular and useful of the ministers of our country, who have published their sermons; and I believe that no one of his volumes has been so generally read, and with so much interest, as his *Discourses on the Epistle to the Ephesians*.

I will mention one other advantage of expository preaching. It gives to ministers a great advantage in the exhibition of characters, which they would present to their hearers, either for imitation, or for warning; and opportunities for attacking vices, without incurring the imputation of personality.

In the regular course of expository exercises, the vices of particular individuals, as well as those which are more common, may be brought to view, and all their guilt and danger exposed, without giving room for the charge, that the minister has gone out of his way, in becoming so directly the censor of public manners, or the guardian of individual virtue. *Truth* is indeed expected from the lips of a faithful minister; and truth which, not unfrequently, must wound the feelings,—happy if it be the heart—of the hearer. But surely, it becomes the preacher to be most cautious, that it be obvious even to him who most acutely feels the rebuke, that he who inflicted the wound intended good alone, and not evil; that he had no passion of his own to gratify in giving pain to another. Happy the minister, who so administers reproof, both public and private, that it shall be felt to be, not *his* admonition or censure, but *God's*. If the heart must be penetrated till it bleeds, let it not

be with the rough hand of the assassin. Let it rather be with the skill of an able physician ; with the tenderness of a sincerely affectionate friend. Let not a minister conceal one truth which he ought to preach ; or pass over one vice, against which he ought to raise his voice, and exert his influence. But it becomes him very seriously to consider, by what manner of preaching he may best accomplish the great objects of his ministry ; and if expository preaching will enable him to become a more successful reprover, it is a consideration of no small importance to enforce the duty.

One of the most venerable clergymen in this section of our country said, that in expository preaching he had found his best opportunities of successfully attacking vice. In preaching in course from the New Testament, he could not but frequently preach to individuals. But every individual perceived that it was Christ or his apostle, who was admonishing him. The preacher must have gone out of his way, and obviously have failed of his duty, if he had failed of applying the instruction, which was keenly felt ; but which came to the heart as an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty. Even the most jealous could not suspect the preacher of an improper design ; nor the most querulous complain, where he had been guilty if he had been silent.

The manner in which expository preaching should be conducted, is a subject of too much importance for a paragraph or two, at the close of this long communication. I shall be happy, if, in stating some of its advantages, I may attract attention to the subject, which I can hardly doubt will be a means of extending the practice ; and with it, the interest and usefulness of the public exercises of the Lord's day.

ON SYSTEMS OF THEOLOGY.

Our minds are so formed, that when the subject, on which we employ them, is at all intricate and complex, we always find ourselves unable to view it at once in all its relations and dependencies. We can consider only one point of it at a time. We are therefore obliged to examine its parts separately and in succession ; and after having done this, we may then proceed to combine the knowledge, we have acquired, and form a judgment of the whole.

This is the way by which we arrive at a knowledge of the character of God. We do not discover the divine attributes, as they exist combined and blended in the divine person ; but

we ascertain them, one after another, as they are revealed to us in the works of nature, or proclaimed to us in the operations of Providence. We see the *power* of God in his creating and forever upholding the world we inhabit, and the thousand other worlds, which he has scattered through the interminable void of space. We see the *wisdom* of God in that wonderful contrivance every where visible throughout the kingdom of nature; by which all the parts of this stupendous whole, are made to move on together in eternal harmony. We see the *benevolence* of God in the nice adaptation of all his dispensations to the condition and wants of his creatures; by which their happiness is promoted, and all things are made to work together for good. After this manner we become acquainted with all the divine attributes; and when we have so discovered, we combine them, and form what we call the character of God. This combination we also call a *system of natural theology*.

After the same manner we also learn the doctrines of revelation. The christian doctrines are not given to us in the New Testament arranged in a systematic form; but we are obliged to deduce them from various parts of scripture, scattered as they are throughout the sacred volume. It is in this way that we discover and collect the articles of our faith, one after another, as we can find them,—incorporating them together into one system, which we denominate a *system of divinity*; and according to which we regulate our religious belief. We have been thus particular in stating the process of the understanding in acquiring religious knowledge, and in forming a system of divinity, because we think the very mode of proceeding to be such, as to expose us to errors and mistakes. Some of the sources of these we shall now rapidly mention and illustrate; premising however, that our remarks will be applicable to those who *adopt* systems already framed, as well as to those, who frame them for themselves; for in both cases the process is similar, and the dangers are the same.

The first source of error which we shall mention, consists in our disposition to make or adopt a system *too soon*;—before we have acquired a sufficiently full and accurate knowledge of the single doctrines, out of which it is to be, or has been formed. When mankind possess any information upon a subject, no matter how imperfect and partial it may be, they are impatient and uneasy till they have reduced it to a theory. As soon therefore, as they have caught a glimpse of a few of the doctrines of our religion, they proceed to frame or choose a system, and readily supply, as they go along, what they want in information, by imagining or inventing whatever they suppose necessary to the harmony of the whole. It is needless for us to

spend any time in showing how much this disposition must expose to error. If we follow it, and adopt a system before we thoroughly understand it—we may be right; but if we are so, it is evident, it must be altogether *by accident*. The evils and errors, which have arisen in the other sciences from this passion for theorizing, have been sufficiently exposed and lamented. But those that have resulted to religion from the same source, do not seem to have been properly animadverted on;—certainly little has been done to correct or prevent them. Ask many a zealous champion for the system he may deem orthodox, whether he clearly and fully understands all the doctrines embraced in it; and we believe, if he will allow himself time for reflection, and liberty to be honest, he will acknowledge his ignorance on a point apparently so important. Nay, state to him those doctrines;—explain them in all their force and in all their bearings, and he will be astonished to find, how opposite those opinions are, which he has unconsciously supported in his *system*, from those which he has really entertained in his *heart*. Oftentimes, indeed, men have in this way been led to renounce systems, which they have hitherto upheld merely because they were ignorant of their import; to renounce them too with something of that horror and loathing, with which they would cast off one, whom they had hitherto regarded and treated as a confidant, and bosom friend, but now find to be a deceiver, and a traitor.

A second source of error is, that in framing or choosing our system of divinity, we may do it under the influence of strong *prejudice*. An unequal and improper stress is often laid upon one or two doctrines, so as virtually to exclude other doctrines, alike true and important. From education, or from natural disposition, or from their own peculiar circumstances, or from some other ground of preference, men are apt to contract a prejudice in favour of one or two opinions considered apart and alone. In framing their systems they will therefore always give these opinions the advantage over the rest;—making *them* every where appear prominent and conspicuous, and flinging all the others into the shade. One or two truths are singled out to extol and celebrate; and every other truth, though of undisputed authority, is virtually, if not expressly, sacrificed to them.

This is especially true of the attributes of God. Hence it is that one system is chiefly employed in telling of the tremendous power of the Deity;—as if its framers were not aware, that this power must always be considered as operating in conjunction with his justice, benevolence and mercy. It is true the disposal of all things is of the Lord; but we must always remember,

that it is utterly inconsistent with his justice, and therefore certainly contradictory to fact, to suppose that any of his arbitrary determinations are in any sense *compulsory* on us as voluntary and accountable agents. Another system is chiefly occupied in celebrating God's wisdom, his knowledge of the past, the present, and the future. But we should recollect, that there are other attributes of the Deity besides his wisdom, that ought to be considered. We should not, therefore, ascribe to him any thing, merely because it *seems* to be implied in his omniscience, if, at the same time it seems to be incompatible with any of his other attributes: for its seeming incompatibility with any one of his other attributes is an argument as strong *against* its being ascribed to him, as its seeming implication in his omniscience is *in favour* of its being ascribed to him. Again, another system is chiefly employed in vindicating divine justice; as if it were not equally important to have reference to his benevolence and mercy. The fact is, we must not, from our partiality to any one of the divine attributes, single that out, and accommodate every other to it. Power, wisdom, justice, benevolence and mercy, unite and harmonize in the divine character; they are not to be considered as if they were distinct and independent, but as united together in one, and modifying one another in their operations. We must pay equal respect to each and all of them. We must not ascribe any thing to God, because it appears to be required by one, if it be not also consistent with all his attributes: for the perfection of any one is not found singly in itself, but in its harmony with the whole.

A third danger to be apprehended is, that after having formed or adopted our system, we shall insensibly slide into the idea, that it is *entirely* and *demonstratively* true; whereas from its very nature it is and must be more or less *hypothetical*. Our systems are framed, as we have observed, by bringing together and combining the single and separate principles and doctrines, which we have previously learned. But how continually are we reminded, by the narrowness and obscurity of our views, that we know but in part, and prophesy but in part! After having arrived at as full and accurate a knowledge, as we possibly can, of the divine character and administration, we are often forced to exclaim—"Lo, these are a part of his ways, but how little a portion is seen of him!" This defectiveness in our knowledge is not, however, allowed to appear in our systems of theology. From their very nature and design, they must be made to seem *complete in themselves*. Whatever we want, therefore, in knowledge, we are obliged to supply *by hypothesis*.

Moreover, we do not form a system merely to embody and condense the knowledge we have already acquired, but also for the purpose of accounting for, and explaining away any difficulties, and apparent contradictions, that may exist and embarrass the subject. Theology, or divinity, by which we mean that knowledge which relates to the character of God, and his moral government of the world, is a science involving many difficulties. Whether we consider the works of God, his providence or his word, we find many things, which scarcely appear consistent with his true character. We, therefore, seek for some principles to account for such apparent contradictions; and the principles, which any one adopts for this purpose, constitute his system. Now the very design, for which these principles are sought, shows that part of them at least must be hypothetical; for if we could explain every thing in providence without taking any thing on hypothesis, then these apparent contradictions would not exist, and we should have no occasion to form a system for the purpose of explaining them. Yet, notwithstanding the fact that every system of divinity is, in part at least, hypothetical; after the system is once formed, this circumstance is soon forgotten. That part which is so, is confounded with that which is certainly true. This is strikingly exemplified in the case of those systems, which have been long in existence, and to which antiquity has affixed the seal of authority. In them, those parts which were taken for granted, and inserted without any sufficient proofs of their being true, are now regarded with as much reverence and respect, as those for which undeniable evidence can be produced. The Calvinist, for example, feels as much respect for the doctrine of Christ's two natures, as he does for the doctrine of Christ's Messiahship;—though the former is only an hypothesis invented probably to reconcile the other doctrines of calvinism, while the latter is the fundamental doctrine of christianity, and is supported and corroborated by every part of revelation. The consequence is, that wherever he finds any thing in reason or revelation clearly contradictory to the supposition of two natures in one person—he does not, as he ought to do, make his hypothesis yield at once to the genuine doctrine, but he opposes the one to the other, and endeavours to modify, and limit the doctrine, so as to hold his hypothesis.—But we shall be told, that if we give up the hypothesis of the two natures, the whole system of calvinism must fall to the ground. So much the worse for that system. It is to be remembered, however, that we have nothing to do with the difficulties and embarrassments of Mr. Calvin, or any of his disciples. It is enough for us to reconcile those difficulties and apparent con-

tradictions, that arise among the established and acknowledged truths of our religion. If an hypothesis is contradicted by any clear and plain doctrine, either of reason or revelation, we must discard it; and if, in consequence of that, the whole system falls, let it fall.

We have now mentioned three causes of error, to which those, who either frame or adopt a system in theology, are liable.

In forming or adopting a system, therefore, we should be on our guard. We should embrace no one, already formed, till we thoroughly understand it and have diligently and faithfully compared it with the word of God. Thousands of thousands have been imposed upon through their negligence of this precaution. We should adopt no system merely because it is an old one, or a new one, a long one, or a short one, nor yet because it numbers among its supporters great names. We should examine it for ourselves; we should find out what it really contains; its meaning, its spirit, its tendency; and having subjected it to this severe examination, if we are satisfied with every thing it includes and implies, *then* we may adopt it, but not before.

In adopting it, we should also as much as possible, free ourselves from all our prejudices and prepossessions. We endeavour to do this in respect to every other subject; why should we not do it in respect to religion? Neither should we go about to patch up a system, which shall agree *in part* at least with that in which we have been educated. We should seek for truth, *simple truth*; and we should be happy to gain it, wherever it may be found; even though we may receive it from an enemy, and even though it may run directly counter to our previous sentiments, and our natural dispositions.

And after we have formed our system we should be careful lest we place too much reliance on it. It is still the work of man. Much of error may mingle in it, and it may be founded on false and deceptive principles. We should therefore always hold our minds open to conviction, that we may reject it altogether, or any part of it, as soon as we may have reason to believe it to be untenable. No temptation whatever should induce us to continue our support to what we think unworthy of it—wresting scripture, colouring facts, and sophisticating reason, to give credit to unauthorized speculations. If we have hitherto been in an error, we should have the magnanimity to own it. And if we have hitherto given our names and our hearts to a system, which we find not deserving of either, we should have the honesty to renounce it.

THE PRESENT STATE OF RELIGIOUS PARTIES IN ENGLAND.

The following account of the present state of religious parties in England, has been sent us for publication by a respected friend, extracted from a sermon of the Rev. Mr. Belsham of London. It will be found to have been written with great candour, and is no doubt accurate in its statements, as it is interesting.

“The two great classes of religious professors in this country are those who adhere to the discipline and worship of the established church, and those who secede from it; or in other words, **CHURCHMEN** and **DISSENTERS**.

“The frequenters and supporters of the established worship are, together, far more numerous than any class of nonconformists separately considered, but perhaps inferior to the whole collectively. And in the judgment of many impartial persons this disparity is continually augmenting.

“The **ESTABLISHED CHURCH** is at this time divided into two great parties.

“The **FIRST** and by far the most powerful party consists of those who adhere to the church upon the ground of *political expedience*; because they think, and perhaps justly, that an establishment of religion is of great importance to the security of government and of good morals, and are persuaded that the existing establishment is best adapted to the British constitution, and ought to be supported, unless very grave and important reasons can be assigned to show the necessity of a change.

“A **SECOND**, and a very numerous, respectable, and increasing body of members of the established church, are those who are commonly called evangelical, who *seriously believe the doctrines* of the articles, and who publicly profess and teach them. They are generally pious in their conversation, and exemplary in their morals; and are very zealous, active, and liberal, in propagating what they conceive to be the doctrines of the gospel and those of the established church. These greatly prefer the discipline of the church and its modes of worship to those of any class of nonconformists, and cultivate a popular strain of preaching, which commonly fills the churches, wherever they are settled. One would naturally suppose that this description of churchmen must be in high estimation with the ruling powers, and with those who profess the warmest zeal for the prosperity of the church. But the fact is otherwise: and the reason is this. The evangelical churchmen, though they are true and ardent friends to the order and discipline of the church, justly lay a still greater stress upon purity of faith and seriousness of spirit; and these qualities they love and honour wherever they are found, whether among churchmen or

dissenters. They are therefore ready to join cordially with nonconformists in every scheme the object of which is to promote what they believe to be the truth and spirit of their common christianity, whether within or without the pale of the establishment, and whether immediately conducive or not to its separate interest. This highly meritorious and truly christian liberality is exceedingly offensive to those who prize the interest of the church as paramount to all other considerations ; and for this reason the evangelical clergy and laity of the established religion are held in greater aversion by what are called the high church party, than even the most obnoxious of the non-conforming sects.

"I shall now give a brief and cursory view of the present state of the **NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES**.

"**PRESBYTERIANISM** has for many years been lost in England : and though here and there the name of Assemblies, and even of Presbyteries, may be retained, the authority of these bodies is totally gone. The general assembly of the church of Scotland, which is essentially presbyterian, and which originally acknowledged and held communion with the Presbyterians of England, has within these few years abandoned them altogether, and prohibited their ministers from officiating in the established churches in that part of the United Kingdom, to which they formerly obtained easy access. There are, however, still many congregations which choose to retain the name of presbyterian. They are chiefly such as indulge a greater latitude of thinking upon religious subjects than their Independent brethren ; and who do not wholly adopt the mode of independent discipline. The **INDEPENDENTS** generally adhere to Calvinistic principles, and to their original plan of church government : but upon the latter they appear to lay less stress than in former times ; and if their brethren agree with them in doctrine and in spirit, they make considerable allowance for a difference of judgment and practice in things now allowed to be indifferent.

"A third denomination of christians are **THE BAPTISTS**, or those christians who defer the baptism of the descendants of baptized persons till they come to years of discretion.

"The Baptists are distinguished into general and particular. The General Baptists are of the Arminian persuasion. They believe in free-will and general redemption. They maintain that Christ died for all men ; and that all may be saved if they will ; that the offer of salvation is made to all mankind, and that none are excluded from final happiness by an absolute and irreversible decree.

“The Particular Baptists are strict Calvinists. They believe that from all eternity God elected a certain number to everlasting life : and they maintain that the benefits of the death of Christ extend to the elect only : for that if Christ had died for all mankind, with regard to the majority he would have died in vain.

“It is a remarkable fact, that the General Baptists, though not a numerous, have usually distinguished themselves as an inquisitive and an enlightened body of christians : and that some of the most learned and most liberal theologians of modern times, both at home and in foreign countries, have been members of this communion. Probably, as the principle of their dissent from their Calvinistic brethren was a desire to vindicate the divine character, which they considered as inculpated by the gloomy system of the reformer of Geneva, the same principle led them to examine other doctrines with greater freedom ; and consequently to reject more of the popular errors which have prevailed in the world, and to embrace a purer and a more liberal system of faith.

“Another party has lately appeared in the christian world which has hitherto been embraced by comparatively a very small number, and is not likely ever to make many proselytes ; because it contravenes the uniform practice of the christian church from the age of the apostles ; I mean the party of those who *deny the permanency* of the institution of baptism, and who conceive of it as a rite which was limited to proselytes from another religion. The advocates of this doctrine, though few in number, have commonly been persons of considerable respectability, and some of them of great learning. Their error, for such I conceive it to be, arises from the unfounded assumption that christianity is of a nature too spiritual and refined to admit of positive institutions, and from neglecting to inquire into, or duly to appreciate, the historical evidence of what Christ and his apostles actually thought fit to practise and to enjoin.

“The last century was memorable for giving birth to two numerous sects, which from very small beginnings have advanced to great notoriety and importance. These are the two sects of **METHODISTS**, the **Arminian** and the **Calvinistic**.

The founders of these sects were contemporary students at the university of Oxford ; who being themselves of a pious and enthusiastic disposition, prevailed upon some others of their fellow collegians to join with them in their religious exercises. When they quitted the university they travelled up and down the country, preaching sometimes in churches, sometimes in dissenting chapels, and sometimes in the streets and fields, with a view to convert and to reform the people. Soon after

these leaders of the sect had left the university, they differed upon the question of general and particular redemption, after which they separated; Mr. Whitfield becoming the founder of the Calvinistic, and Mr. Westley of the Arminian, Methodist.*

“The existence of these two theological parties, both numerous, and both active and zealous in making proselytes, has produced a considerable effect upon the manners of the country, and particularly in the lower classes of society. Many regard the Methodists of both descriptions as, generally speaking, immoral and dishonest, as wolves in sheeps’ clothing, who have done and are doing much to corrupt and to deteriorate the morals of the inferior orders. And it cannot but happen in a sect so numerous that many will be hypocritical, and many immoral. And the more severe the profession, and the more zeal and bitterness there is in judgments passed upon others, the more en-

* George Whitfield was a man of uncommon eloquence and fervour of spirit. He preached with great success both in England and America; and many congregations were formed under his inspection, and took their name from him. But he was a man of great simplicity of mind and artlessness of manners: he had no desire to set himself up as the head of a sect, and he framed no system of discipline to distinguish his followers from other denominations of christians. The consequence is that the Calvinistic Methodists are now very much confounded with the regular Independents. There are, however, some shades of difference. The Methodists do not adopt the rigorous discipline of the independent churches; and they are less attached to a learned ministry. On account of these differences they are called by some the fourth denomination of dissenters; and in London these have been computed to out number all the other denominations taken together.

“John Wesley was a man of a very strong and comprehensive mind, of very insinuating address, and a very mild and engaging speaker. His great ambition was to be the founder of a sect; and to this end he retained in his own hands during his life all the property which was collected from his followers for ecclesiastical purposes, and the whole discipline of the sect. He erected chapels, he educated and ordained ministers, he appointed them their respective stations, and removed them at pleasure; he divided the country into circuits, and his disciples into classes, appointing to each their proper officers, and superintending the whole himself. In this way the original *Methodists* (for that is the title which, though at first applied by way of reproach, they choose to retain,) formed a united and well-disciplined body under the direction of one head. After Mr. Wesley’s death, the property and the ecclesiastical authority devolved by his will upon a large body of ministers nominated by him as trustees, with power to supply their own vacancies. This body takes the name of the Conference, and acting usually with the policy for which aristocracies are celebrated, the sect of Methodists under their direction remains embodied, annually increasing its numbers and extending its influence, till it has at length become a compact and numerous party, of no small political consideration and consequence. This fact was abundantly evident in the resistance made to Lord Sidmouth’s bill, in which the Wesleyan Methodists took a leading part.

emies they will create to themselves ; and the more will every miscarriage and every fault of the members, and especially the prominent members, of the Society, be watched, and blazoned, and exaggerated, and imputed to the whole body. But upon the whole, much as I differ from the Methodists of both parties in their speculative creed, I am decidedly of opinion that they have done unspeakable good among the lower orders of society ; and have contributed beyond all calculation to reform and regenerate certain descriptions of men to whom no regular minister would have extended his notice. I particularly refer to the colliers, miners, and others, in various parts of England, who from a state of ignorance and barbarism little better than that of savages, are now become sober, honest, and industrious ; and instead of being the pests and terror of the districts which they inhabit, are transformed into regular, peaceable, and useful members of society. This is a benefit of the noblest kind, the praise of which cannot without the greatest injustice be denied to the Methodists : and it is an honour which they have dearly purchased amidst innumerable hardships, injuries, and insults ; and often even at the peril of their lives.

“ The society commonly called **QUAKERS**, but who choose to distinguish themselves by the title of **FRIENDS**, with respect to numbers, is supposed to remain nearly stationary, the members not being much animated with a spirit of proselytism. It is to be lamented that this respectable Society has of late departed in any degree from their original liberality with regard to speculative opinions ; and, with a violence bordering upon persecution, has disowned some persons of great worth and piety, for avowing opinions which a century ago would probably have passed unnoticed, if not even approved. But the merits of this distinguished and highly useful body of christians have far exceeded and amply atoned for their occasional failings. . Excluded by their principle from fashionable luxuries and fashionable diversions, they have devoted much of their time and wealth and talents to the purposes of philanthropy. To their active and persevering efforts the country is in a considerable degree indebted for the abolition of the slave-trade ; and to their strenuous exertion it has been principally owing, that the establishment of schools for the education of the poor was not suffered to sink in its infant state, under the vehement opposition which it encountered from very powerful adversaries. Of late this wise and benevolent Society have directed their attention towards alleviating the miseries and correcting the morals of those sinks and nurseries of every thing that is bad in the human character, the common prisons ; and have undertaken the apparently hopeless task of reforming the lives of their wretched inhabitants : in

which difficult process, however, some enlightened and humane individuals have succeeded to a degree which has not only attracted the notice and the praise of royalty, but which deserves and must secure the approbation and applause of every friend to virtue, to humanity, and religion.

“In the course of the last fifty years, in direct opposition to the full tide of religious prejudice, and amidst the clamours of hosts of adversaries, the true Unitarian doctrine, under the protection of Divine Providence, has lifted up its head and made its way in a manner, and with a rapidity, which its most sanguine advocates would not have ventured to anticipate. Half a century ago it was scarcely known: or if upon any occasion mentioned, it created a universal thrill of horror. *Here* indeed a Newton or a Haynes, and *there* a Lardner, a Cardale, or a Fleming; a profound and inquiring philosopher on one side, or a learned, impartial, and judicious divine on the other,—might be seen, who to his intimate friends would venture to disclose the portentous and dangerous secret, that in his estimation pure Unitarianism was the doctrine of the gospel, and the genuine belief of the primitive church. But such disclosures were commonly received with surprise and coldness; and were secretly attributed to that pride of learning, that love of novelty, and that fondness for speculation, which so often mislead the judgment of the philosopher and the scholar, and which give him a distaste to the doctrines of the gospel, and reconcile his mind to the grossest perversion of the plain language of scripture. But, generally speaking, the truth was seldom divulged, and the light which had been kindled was concealed. Indeed, it was not very safe to make it known; and few had the hardihood to encounter the general hatred of mankind.

“The destined period at last arrived. A man was found who possessed the patience, the learning, and the impartiality which were requisite for the detection of error and the discovery of truth; the honesty and courage to avow it; the firmness and fortitude to sacrifice his worldly interests and his dazzling prospects at the shrine of conscience; and by a manly profession of his principles, and the public dedication of his labours to the promulgation of christian truth, to rouse the attention of mankind.—This man was Theophilus Lindsey:—who, after he had honourably resigned all his preferments and prospects in the church, was directed by Providence to this great metropolis, where he unexpectedly found many friends, who revered his magnanimity, and embraced his principles; and who in a short time enabled him to build this chapel in which we are now assembled. By degrees the public attention was turned to the subject. First one, and then another discovered the light of

truth, and avowed their convictions. The number gradually increased. The alarm subsided. Societies, one after another, were instituted for the diffusion of religious knowledge. Congregations adopted Unitarian principles; and were superintended by learned, pious, and laborious ministers, who, discarding antiquated and obsolete formularies of faith, bestowed the most meritorious and indefatigable pains in instructing the rising generation in the purity of revealed truth.

“Thirty years ago, when I first had the happiness to discern its evidence, there were only two or three congregations in the kingdom, and here and there an individual besides, who acknowledged its truth. Whereas, there is now hardly a considerable town in England where there is not a flourishing society of Unitarian christians, and hardly a village in which there is not some individual, who, being himself instructed in the truth, does not feel a generous desire to impart knowledge and happiness to his neighbours.”

MEANS OF PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY.

WE live at a time, when the obligation of extending Christianity is more felt than in many past ages. There is much stir, motion, and zeal around us in this good cause. Even those, who seem not to be burdened by an excess of piety themselves, are in earnest to give it to others. The activity of multitudes is taking strongly this direction; and as men are naturally restless, and want room for action, and will do mischief rather than do nothing, a philanthropist will rejoice that this new channel is opened for carrying off the superabundant energies of multitudes, even if no other good should result from it.

We hope however much other good. We trust, that whilst many inferior motives and many fanatical impulses are giving birth and action to large bodies in christendom; whilst the love of sway in some, and the love of congregating in others, and the passion for doing something great and at a distance in all, are rearing mighty institutions among us; still many sincere christians are governed in these concerns by a supreme desire of spreading christianity. They have found the gospel an infinite good, and would communicate it to their fellow-beings. They have drunk from the fountain of life, and would send forth the stream to gladden every wilderness and solitary place, and to assuage the thirst of every anxious and afflicted mind. They turn with continual pleasure to the prophetic passages of scripture, and, interpreting them by their wishes, hope a speedy

change in the moral state of the world, and are impatient to bear a part in this stupendous renovation. That they are doing good we doubt not, though perhaps not in the way which they imagine or would prefer. The immediate and general success of their attempts would perhaps be ultimately injurious to christianity. They are sending out, together with God's word, corrupt interpretations of some parts of it, which considerably neutralize its saving power, and occasionally make it a positive injury. They are perhaps to do good, not by success, so much as by failure. Almost all great enterprises are accomplished gradually, and by methods which have been learnt from many unsuccessful trials, from a slow accumulation of experience. The first labourers often do little more than teach those who come after them what to avoid, and how to labour more effectually than themselves. But be the issue what it may, sincere Christians who embark in this good work, not from party spirit and self-conceit, as if they and their sect were depositories of all truth and virtue, but from unaffected philanthropy and attachment to Jesus Christ, will have their reward. Even a degree of extravagance in such a cause may be forgiven. Men are willing that the imagination should be kindled on other subjects; that the judgment should sometimes slumber, and leave the affections to feed on hopes brighter than reality; that patriotism, and philanthropy and the domestic affections should sometimes break out in chivalrous enterprises, and should seek their ends by means on which the reason may look coldly. Why then shall we frown on every deviation from the strictest judiciousness in a concern which appeals so strongly to the heart as the extension of christianity? Men may be too rational as well as too fervent; and the man, whose pious wish of the speedy conversion of the world rises into a strong anticipation of the event, and who, taking his measure of duty from the primitive disciples, covets sacrifices in so good a cause, is an incomparably nobler spirit than he, who, believing that the moral condition of the world is as invariable as the laws of material nature, and seeking pretexts for sloth in a heart-chilling philosophy, has no concern for the multitudes who are sitting in darkness, and does nothing to spread the religion which he believes to have come from heaven.

There is one danger however, at a period like the present, when we are aiming to send christianity to a distance, which demands attention. It is the danger of neglecting the best methods of propagating christianity, of overlooking much plainer obligations than that of converting heathens, of forgetting the claims of our religion at home and by our fire sides. It happens, that on this as on almost every subject, our most important du-

ties are quiet, retired, noiseless, attracting little notice, and administering little powerful excitement to the imagination. The surest efforts for extending christianity are those which few observe, which are recorded in no magazine, blazoned at no anniversaries, immortalized by no eloquence. Such efforts, being enjoined only by conscience and God, and requiring steady, patient, unwearied toil, we are apt to overlook, and perhaps never more so, than when the times furnish a popular substitute for them, and when we can discharge our consciences by labours, which, demanding little self-denial, are yet talked of as the highest exploits of christian charity. Hence it is, that when most is said of labours to propagate christianity, the least may be really and effectually done. We hear a torrent roaring, and imagine that the fields are plentifully watered, when the torrent owes its violence to a ruinous concentration of streams, which before moved quietly in a thousand little channels, moistening the hidden roots, and publishing their course not to the ear, but to the eye, by the refreshing verdure which grew up around them. It is proper then, when new methods are struck out for sending christianity abroad, to remind men often of the old fashioned methods of promoting it, to insist on the superiority of the means, which are in almost every man's reach, which require no extensive associations, and which do not subject us to the temptations of exaggerated praise. We do not mean that any exertion, which promises to extend our religion in any tolerable state of purity is to be declined. But the first rank is to be given to the efforts which God has made the plain duties of men in all ranks and conditions of life. Two of these methods will be briefly mentioned.

First. Every individual should feel, that whilst his influence over other men's hearts and character is very bounded, his power over his own heart is great and constant, and that his zeal for extending christianity is to appear chiefly in extending it through his own mind and life. Let him remember that he as truly enlarges God's kingdom by invigorating his own moral and religious principles, as by communicating them to others. Our first concern is at home; our chief work is in our own breasts. It is idle to talk of our anxiety for other men's souls, if we neglect our own. Without personal virtue and religion, we cannot, even if we would, do much for the cause of Christ. It is only by purifying our own conceptions of God and duty, that we can give clear and useful views to others. We must first feel the power of religion, or we cannot recommend it with an unaffected and prevalent zeal. Would we then promote pure christianity? Let us see that it be planted and take root in our own minds, and that no busy concern for others take us

from the labour of self-inspection, and the retired and silent offices of piety.

The *second* method is intimately connected with the first. It is example. This is a means within the reach of all. Be our station in life what it may, it has duties, in performing which faithfully, we give important aid to the cause of morality and piety. The efficacy of this means of advancing christianity cannot be easily calculated. Example has an insinuating power, transforming the observer without noise, attracting him without the appearance of effort. A truly christian life is better than large contributions of wealth for the propagation of christianity. The most prominent instruction of Jesus on this point is, that we must let men "see our good works," if we would lead them to "glorify our Father in heaven." Let men see in us, that religion is something real, something more than high sounding and empty words, a restraint from sin, a bulwark against temptation, a spring of upright and useful action; let them see it, not an idle form, nor a transient feeling, but our companion through life, infusing its purity into our common pursuits, following us to our homes, setting a guard round our integrity in the resorts of business, sweetening our tempers in seasons of provocation, and disposing us habitually to sympathy with others, and to patience and cheerfulness under our own afflictions, to candid judgment, and to sacrifices for others good; and we may hope that our light will not shine uselessly, that some slumbering conscience will be roused by this testimony to the excellence and practicableness of religion, that some worldly professor of christianity will learn his obligations and blush for his criminal inconsistency, and that some, in whom the common arguments for our religion may have failed to work a full belief, will be brought to the knowledge of the truth by this plain practical proof of the heavenly nature of christianity. Every man is surrounded with beings, who are moulded more or less by the principles of sympathy and imitation; and this social part of our nature he is bound to press into the service of christianity.

It will not be supposed from these remarks on the duty of aiding christianity by our example, that religion is to be worn ostentatiously, and that the christian is studiously to exhibit himself and his good works for imitation. That same book which enjoins us to be patterns, tells us to avoid parade, and even to prefer entire secrecy in our charities and our prayers. Nothing destroys the weight of example so much as labour to make it striking and observed. Goodness, to be interesting, must be humble, modest, unassuming, not fond of show, not waiting for great and conspicuous occasions, but disclosing itself without labour, and without design, in pious and benevolent offices,

so simple, so minute, so steady, so habitual, that they will carry a conviction of the singleness and purity of the heart from which they proceed. Such goodness is never lost. The very humility in which it would wrap itself lends it new attraction and glory, just as the lights of heaven often change into their own splendour the cloud which threatened to obscure them.

A pure example, which is found to be more consistent in proportion as it is more known, is the best method of preaching and extending christianity. Without it, zeal for converting men brings reproach on the cause. A bad man, or a man of only ordinary goodness, who puts himself forward in this work, throws a suspiciousness over the efforts of better men, and thus the world come to set down all labour for spreading christianity as mere pretence. Let not him who will not submit to the toil of making himself better, become a reformer at home or abroad. Let not him who is known to be mean, or dishonest or intriguing, or censorious, or unkind in his neighbourhood, talk of his concern for other men's souls. His life is an injury to religion, which his contributions, of zeal or even of wealth cannot repair, and its injuriousness is aggravated by these very attempts to expiate its guilt, to reconcile him to himself.

It is well known, that the greatest obstruction to christianity in heathen countries is, the palpable and undeniable depravity of christian nations. They abhor our religion, because we are such unhappy specimens of it. They are unable to read our books, but they can read our lives, and what wonder, if they reject with scorn a system under which the vices seem to have flourished so luxuriantly. The Indian of both hemispheres has reason to set down the christian as little better than himself. He associates with the name perfidy, fraud, rapacity, and slaughter. Can we wonder that he is unwilling to receive a religion from the hand, which has chained or robbed him? Thus bad example is the great obstruction to christianity, abroad as well as at home; and perhaps little good is to be done abroad, until we become better at home, until real christians understand and practice their religion more thoroughly, and by their example and influence spread it among their neighbours and through their country, so that the aspect of christian nations will be less shocking and repulsive to the Jew, Mahometan, and Pagan. Our first labour should be upon ourselves; and indeed if our religion be incapable of bearing more fruit among ourselves, it hardly seems to deserve a very burning zeal for its propagation. The question is an important one; would *much* be gained to heathen countries, were we to make them precisely what nations called Christian *now* are? That the change would be beneficial, we grant; but how ma-

ny dark stains would remain on their characters. They would continue to fight and shed blood as they now do, to resent injuries hotly, to worship present gain and distinction, and to pursue the common business of life on the principles of undisguised selfishness, and they would learn one lesson of iniquity which they have not yet acquired, and that is, to condemn and revile their brethren, who should happen to view the most perplexed points of theology differently from themselves. The truth is, Christian nations want a genuine reformation, one worthy of the name. They need to have their zeal directed, not so much to the spreading of the gospel abroad, as to the application of its plain precepts to their daily business, to the education of their children, to the treatment of their domestics and dependants, and to their social and religious intercourse. They need to understand, that a man's piety is to be estimated not so much by his professions or direct religious exercises, as by a conscientious surrender of his will, passions, worldly interests, and prejudices to the acknowledged duties of christianity, and especially by a philanthropy resembling in its great features of mildness, activity and endurance, that of Jesus Christ. They need to give up their severe inquisition into their neighbour's opinions, and to begin in earnest to seek for themselves, and to communicate to others a nobler standard of temper and practice, than they have yet derived from the scriptures. In a word, they need to learn the real value and design of christianity by the only thorough and effectual process; that is, by drinking deeply into its spirit of love to God and man. If, in this age of societies, we should think it wise to recommend another institution for the propagation of christianity, it would be one, the members of which should be pledged to assist and animate one another in following strictly all the precepts of Christ, in living according to the sermon on the mount, and we should hope more service to religion from such an association, could men be found to enter it honestly, than from almost any other, which is receiving the patronage of the christian world.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

GROTIUS.

[THE following eloquent character of Grotius is from 'A Discourse on the Study of the Law of Nature and Nations ; introductory to a course of lectures on that science,' by Sir James Mackintosh published in the year 1800. It is connected with a criticism of his works on the laws of war and peace. It is almost unnecessary to say that the theological writings of Grotius, particularly his commentaries, still retain a high degree of value.]

"So great is the uncertainty of posthumous reputation, and so liable is the fame of even the greatest men to be obscured by those new fashions of thinking and writing, which succeed each other so rapidly among polished nations, that Grotius, who filled so large a space in the eye of his contemporaries, is now perhaps known to some of my readers only by name. Yet if we fully estimate both his endowments and his virtues, we may justly consider him as one of the most memorable men who have done honour to modern times. He combined the discharge of the most important duties of active and public life with the attainment of that exact and various learning which is generally the portion only of the recluse student. He was distinguished as an advocate and a magistrate, and he composed the most valuable works of the law of his own country ; he was almost equally celebrated as an historian, an orator, a poet, and a divine ; a disinterested statesman, a philosophical lawyer, a patriot who united moderation with firmness, and a theologian, who was taught candour by his learning. With singular merit and singular felicity he preserved a life so blameless, that in times of the most furious civil and religious faction, the sagacity of fierce and acute adversaries was vainly exerted to discover a stain upon his character. It was his fate to be exposed to the severest tests of human virtue ; but such was the happy temperature of his mind, that he was too firm to be subdued by adversity, and too mild and honest to be provoked to violence by injustice. Amidst all the hard trials and galling vexations of a turbulent political life, he never once deserted his friends when they were unfortunate, nor insulted his enemies when they were weak. Unmerited exile did not damp his patriotism ; the bitterness of controversy did not extinguish his charity. He was just, even to his persecutors, and faithful to his ungrateful country."

LE COURAYER.

[The following is an extract from one of the works of the celebrated Dr. Courayer ; who though born a Roman Catholic, and distinguished by genius and learning, that would have secured him valuable ecclesiastical preferment, was led in the course of his inquiries to opinions contrary to the church of Rome, and took refuge in England from the obloquy and persecution, which he found to be the consequence of his dissent. There he found distinguished patrons and friends ; was highly esteemed for his virtues and talents, and particularly by his instructive, entertaining, and inoffensive manner of conversation, obtained a cordial welcome in the houses of some of the first families of the kingdom. He was honoured with the friendship of Queen Caroline, who bestowed upon him a liberal pension. Though he never formally renounced the communion of the church of Rome, yet he disapproved of many of its opinions and superstitions. He died in Oct. 1776, at the advanced age of 95 ; and towards the close of his life he wrote and subscribed with his own hand "A declaration of his last sentiments on the different doctrines of religion ;" which from a writer of such celebrity and on a subject so important has excited the curiosity of the learned, and will be found interesting to every serious inquirer in religion. As the work is rare in this country, we shall, as we have opportunity, present some extracts.]

"On the point of appearing before God, both to fulfil the duty of sincerity, and to furnish all, into whose hands this writing may fall, with a testimony, which every person living owes to truth ; urged moreover by my conscience to declare my thoughts on the doctrines of christianity, and the differences, which divide christian societies, I proceed to do it with that simplicity, which becomes integrity in the near view of death.

"1. I firmly believe, that there is a God. Atheism appears to me a sentiment as pernicious as it is unreasonable. Equally contrary to the light of nature, the purity of manners, and the good of society. It is the interest of the whole world to proscribe a doctrine founded only on blindness and corruption. It is making too bad a use of liberty and reason to employ them both in declaring a truth, which all nature announces, against which the heart struggles in vain, to abandon itself to its passions with less scruple and remorse.

"I believe not only that there is a God, but moreover that there is but *One* : and while I ascribe to God the glory of all good, I believe I can have recourse only to the will of man, for the discovery of the origin of moral evil.

"The more I have studied the gospel, the more worthy it has appeared to me of approbation, and the more worthy of be-

ing adhered to. Nothing is so pure, as the worship it proposes; nothing so exact as the rules it prescribes; nothing so holy as the life it enjoins; nothing so noble as the recompense it leads us to hope for; nothing is so proper to render men and societies happy, since by subduing our passions to reason and religion, it takes away the source of our miseries by taking away the source of our disorders. It supposes all natural truths and destroys none. It reforms all vices, and conducts to the practice of all virtues. It re-establishes in the minds of men those ideas of justice, of charity, of temperance, of modesty, and of piety, which the author of nature had formed in us, and which sin had destroyed. Nothing is so true, as that which is said by St. Paul, that Jesus Christ hath made all things new; and by a kind of second creation hath rendered us again capable of righteousness and true holiness. The gospel is a new mission, in which religion is no more confined within the limits of a people, or a province; and in which all men, having the same Creator, are recalled without distinction to the same laws and to the same hopes. It is a new worship, in which we are taught that there is no other, which is agreeable to Him, but that which is in spirit and in truth. It is a new morality, which does not confine itself to the repressing those outward actions, which are sinful, but teaches us to dry up the sources of evil actions in condemning even evil thoughts and desires. It operates upon us by new hopes and new fears; and it is no more the expectation of temporal good or the fear of temporal evil, by which we are excited to practise virtue and to avoid vice. Whatever is confined to the present life only appears unworthy of us: and man, better instructed in the grandeur of his origin and of his end, cherishes no thoughts but those which relate to eternity, for which he perceives that his soul was destined."

MARY MAGDALENE.

[As some inquiry has lately been made with respect to the person and character of Mary Magdalene, who is mentioned in the gospels as one of the earliest disciples of our Lord, it may be useful to adduce a few extracts from a letter, written by the candid and learned Dr. Lardner to Jonas Hanway, Esq. in 1758, the object of which was to redeem her memory from a common but most injurious imputation, and to assign the reasons, why houses for the reception of penitent women, who had been disorderly in their lives, should not, as was then proposed by that zealous philanthropist, be called Magdalen houses. We give only an abstract of the whole, which may be read with

profit both for the particular object, for which it was written, and for the scriptural knowledge it exhibits.]

“There has been much discourse about erecting a house for the reception of penitent women, who have been disorderly in their lives : and it has been proposed by some, that they should be called Magdalen houses. But as that denomination is disliked by others, besides myself, I have taken the liberty to address you upon the subject.”

I presume, it may be owing to a supposition, that the fine story, recorded in the seventh chapter of St. Luke’s Gospel of the gracious reception, our Lord gave to a woman, there called a *sinner*, relates to Mary Magdalene : and this has been a common opinion. Nevertheless I cannot think, that she is the person there meant.

“One reason here offers from the history itself, at verse 27., where she is said to be a *woman in the city*, in which our Lord then was : which according to most harmonizers of the gospel was either Capernaum or Nain ; whereas there can be no reason to believe, that Mary Magdalene resided at either of those places. Says Dr. Macknight, “she is called the Magdalene or Magdalite, probably from Magdala, the place of her nativity, a town situated somewhere beside the lake.”

A passage at the beginning of St. Luke’s gospel deserves particular attention : which therefore shall be here recited. “And it came to pass afterwards, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, and certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities ; Mary, called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna, wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and many others which *ministered to him of their substance*.” Luke viii, 1—3.

This text affords many reasons for thinking, that Mary Magdalene is not the woman intended in the preceding chapter. In the first place, it hence appears, that Mary Magdalene was a woman of quality ; but it is very uncommon for such to deserve the character, given ch. vii. 37. “a woman in the city, which was a sinner.” Dr. Macknight argues to the like purpose. “Mary Magdalene seems rather to have been a woman of high station and opulent fortune, being mentioned by St. Luke, even before Joanna, the wife of so great a man as Herod’s steward ; and when the other evangelists have occasion to mention our Lord’s female followers, they commonly assign the first place to Mary Magdalene.

Grotius speaks to the like purpose, and also thinks, that it was at her expense chiefly, that the spices were prepared for embalming the body of Jesus. To which I would add, that the

precedence, just taken notice of, may have been partly owing to her age.

Secondly, in the text we are considering, Mary Magdalene is mentioned with other women, who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. And of her it is said, "out of whom went seven devils." She was therefore one of those, who are sometimes called demoniacs, and had been possessed, as we generally say, by evil spirits. Now though we cannot with certainty conclude what was her particular affection, whether a distempered frame of mind, or epilepsy, or something else, it appears to me very evident, that some *natural*, not moral distemper is intended.

Thirdly, In this text Mary Magdalene is mentioned with divers other honourable women, who attended our Lord in his journies, and who ministered to him of their substance. But it may be justly questioned, whether our Lord would have allowed of that, if Mary's conduct had been disreputable in the former part of her life. For though he received such an one as a penitent, and assured her of the forgiveness of her sins, it would not be easily reconciled with the rules of prudence to admit such a person to a stated attendance. This argument has affected the minds of many learned men.

Nor can it be imagined, that any women of distinction and good credit, would admit into their company one, who had been under the reproach of a disorderly life. By St. Matthew they are mentioned thus. "Many women were there, beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him; among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children. See also Mark xv. 40. 7. Luke xxiv. 10. John xix. 25. All these must have been women of an unblemished character, and so far was there from being any exception to Mary Magdalene, that she is several times mentioned as the most honourable, and placed first of all.

Jerom says, "They provided, for our Lord's accommodation in his food and garments; and possibly Mary Magdalene is mentioned the first, because she presided in the direction of the affairs, which were under their care.

When they accompanied our Lord in any of his journies, they may have followed at a distance, and in a separate band. And, as may be well supposed, they had some female servants of their own. But the woman called *a sinner*, was absolutely excluded from having any part in that company. When she came into the room, where our Lord was, and gave proofs of repentance, he graciously and openly received her as a penitent. "He said unto her," thy sins, which are many, are forgiven;

"go in peace." And in all this, our Lord acted agreeably to his great design, which was to bring sinful men to repentance : and he faithfully discharged the important commission, that had been given him, which was "to seek and to save, that which was lost."

But it cannot be reasonably supposed, that he would admit such a person, as he did Mary Magdalene, into the number of his stated attendants. And I believe, that they, who attentively observe our Lord's history, as recorded in the gospels, may perceive his life to have been an example of admirable wisdom and prudence, as well as of the strictest virtue, and the most generous goodness and compassion.

Let us now sum up the evidence, so far as we have gone. — Mary of Magdala was a woman of distinction, and very easy in her worldly circumstances. For a while, she had labored under some bodily indisposition, which our Lord miraculously healed ; for which benefit she was ever after very thankful. So far as we know, her conduct was always very regular and free from censure ; and we may reasonably believe, that after her acquaintance with our Saviour it was edifying and exemplary— I conceive of her as a woman of fine understanding and known virtue and discretion, with a dignity of behaviour, becoming her age, her wisdom, and high station. She followed our Lord as her Master and benefactor ; she shewed him great respect in his life, at his death, and after it ; and as appears from three of the evangelists, she was one of those, to whom he first showed himself after his resurrection."

Dr. Lardner then proceeds to some more particular evidence to the same effect, supported by the opinions of several other learned theologians, and concludes as follows.

"After this long argument and so many good authorities, I may leave you to consider, whether they have not some good reason for their judgment, who dislike the denomination or inscription, taken notice of at the beginning of this letter "*A Magdalen house for penitent women.*"

"It appears to me a great abuse of the name of a truly honourable, and I think, truly excellent woman. If Mary's shame had been manifest, and upon record, she could not have been worse stigmatized ; whereas the disadvantageous opinion concerning the former part of her life is founded only in an uncertain and conjectural deduction. And if the notion that she was the woman in Luke seventh, be no more than a vulgar error, it ought to be abandoned by wise men, and not propagated and perpetuated."

THE following verses have been republished in our country; but we believe will be new to many of our readers. They breathe throughout a strain of sentiment, wild, melancholy and solemn, the interest of which is heightened by the circumstances mentioned respecting their author. The versification too is peculiar, and adds to the general effect.

From the West of England Journal.

LINES WRITTEN IN A CHURCH YARD.

BY A SCHOOL BOY—SINCE DECEASED.

"It is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make three Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." MATT. XVI. 14.

METHINKS, it is good to be here :
If thou wilt, let us build—but for whom ?
Nor Elias nor Moses appear ;
But the shadows of eve that encompass the gloom ;
The abode of the dead and the place of the tomb.

Shall we build to ambition ? ah no !
Affrighted he shrinketh away ;
For see they would pin him below
In a small narrow cave, and begirt with cold clay,
To the meanest of reptiles, a peer and a prey.

To beauty ? ah no ! she forgets
The charms which she wielded before ;
Nor knows the foul worm, that he frets
The skin which but yesterday fools could adore,
For the smoothness it held, or the tint which it wore.

Shall we build to the purple of pride ;
The trappings which dizen the proud ?
Alas ! they are all laid aside ;
And here's neither dress nor adornment allow'd,
But the long winding sheet, and the fringe of the shroud !

To riches ? alas ! 'tis in vain,
Who hid in their turns have been hid ;
The treasures are squandered again ;
But here in the grave are all metals forbid,
But the tinsel that shone on the dark coffin lid.

To the pleasures which mirth can afford,
To the revel, the laugh, and the jeer ?
Ah ! here is a plentiful board !
But the guests are all mute at the pitiful cheer,
And none but the worm is a reveller here.

Shall we build to affection and love ?
 Ah no ! they have wither'd and died,
 Or fled with the spirit above :
 Friends, brothers and sisters are laid side by side,
 Yet none have saluted, and none have replied.

Unto sorrow ? the dead cannot grieve,
 Not a sob, not a sigh meets mine ear,
 Which compassion itself could relieve !
 Ah ! sweetly they slumber, nor hope, love nor fear,
 Peace, peace, is the watch word, the only one here.

Unto death, to whom monarchs must bow ?
 Ah no ! for his empire is known,
 And here there are trophies enow,
 Beneath the cold dead ! and around the dark stone ;
 Are the signs of a sceptre that none may disown.

Then the first unto Hope we will build ;
 And look for the sleepers around us to rise !
 The second to Faith, which ensures it fulfill'd ;
 And the third to the lamb of the great sacrifice,
 Who bequeath'd us them both when he rose to the skies.

HERBERT.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE VIII.

1. *Discourses on the Christian Revelation viewed in connexion with the modern astronomy, together with six sermons embracing the last occasioned by the death of the Princess Charlotte of Wales.* By Rev. THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D. minister of the Tron church Glasgow. Andover : Published by Mark Newman. Flaggs and Gould printers. 1818.
2. *Sermons preached in the Tron Church, Glasgow.* By THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D. Glasgow printed. New York, reprinted by Kirk and Mercein. 1819.

DR. Chalmers was first made known to the public by an article entitled "Christianity," which was originally published in the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*. This has been very generally, and on many accounts, deservedly admired. He has since given to the world a series of *Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in connexion with the modern astrono-*

my, and various other sermons and addresses of a miscellaneous character, which were principally delivered in the Tron church, Glasgow. It is our present intention to make some remarks on these latter productions, especially on the astronomical Discourses. There are two considerations which induce us to undertake this notice. From the extent of the universe, as made known to us by modern science, an objection has been derived, which is supposed to bear upon the truth of Christianity. This Dr. Chalmers has undertaken to answer, and we think unsuccessfully. But as we believe, the whole force of the objection is directed against false notions of christianity; we wish to explain our own opinions upon this subject. But beside this, the Discourses of Dr. C., both those in which this objection is discussed, and his other sermons, have gained a popularity, which is so very extraordinary, that we cannot help thinking it worth while to analyze their composition.

Our first concern is with the objection and the answer to it. Dr. C. speaks of it as occurring chiefly in conversation, and as not occupying a prominent place in treatises of infidelity. It is however stated, by the author of the "Age of Reason" in his strong coarse manner, and has been elaborately, in a manner conformed to his views of Christianity, answered by Andrew Fuller in the "Gospel its own Witness." It consists properly of two parts. First it is alleged, that in the Mosaic account of the creation, there is so "worked up" a belief that the world in which we dwell is the whole of the habitable creation, that to believe otherwise, that is, that there are innumerable worlds, renders the christian system of faith "at once little and ridiculous." The objection that the account of Moses supposes the existence of no other habitable world than our own, which is not noticed by Dr. C., if it have any force, goes to prove that Moses was not inspired as a historian. But it seems to us to be altogether frivolous. For what is the basis of this objection of the unbeliever? It rests entirely on the supposition, that God, provided he intended to give to the Jews such a dispensation as is asserted to have been given would at the same time have conveyed some intimations at least, of the extent of the universe. But is this a fair or a rational supposition? Is it not altogether gratuitous? Shall the unbeliever presume to decide what God *ought* to have communicated? Should we expect to find in this early message from heaven, any thing but what it was the especial object of that message to communicate? What then was the object of this communication? It was to instruct a particular nation, during the infancy of the world, in the existence, unity, and perfections of the Deity, to banish idolatry, and to prepare the way for the complete revelation which was made by the Son of God.

This was the scope of the Mosaic dispensation, and all this was fully and completely effected. Is it not then irrational to expect to find in such a communication, the results of modern science anticipated, which results had not the slightest connexion with the express object of that communication? Now the *antecedent probability* that God would have instructed the Jews in the discoveries of modern science, which from their nature require no revelation at all, at the same time that he made a communication to them on a subject entirely different,—this *antecedent probability* is the precise measure of the force of the objection under consideration.

But this objection of the unbeliever seems to us untenable in another view of the subject. The revelations of God to man, it is reasonable to suppose,—it is indeed impossible to believe otherwise,—will not only be adapted to the objects for which they are intended, but also they will be adapted to the circumstances, to the degree of understanding and information of the recipients. What then was the intellectual and moral condition of the Jews? They were a people not yet redeemed from a state of the grossest ignorance, requiring grand and striking miracles to awaken them from intellectual torpor, and continual displays of divine power to keep alive in their minds the most obvious truths. It was to such a people, that the unbeliever demands, that a sublime system of astronomy, perfected as it has been, by modern philosophy, should have been given;—that is, a communication should have been made to them, which, from the nature of the case, they could not have understood. But why is the objection limited to the fact, that the *extent of the material world* was not revealed in the earliest times? A parity of reasoning would lead him to demand that *all* the discoveries of modern science should have been included in the Mosaic dispensation, and in fact that it should contain in embryo the discoveries of all future times;—

“Who asks and reasons thus, will scarce believe
God gives enough, while he has more to give.”

But we proceed to consider the second part of the objection against christianity, derived from the extent of the universe. This regards the redemption of the world. Without following the course which Dr. C. has pursued, or adverting to numerous topics which might as well be introduced in a series of discourses on any other subject, we quote the unbeliever's argument as stated by him, where we first find it.

“In the astronomical objection which infidelity has proposed against the truth of the christian revelation, there is first an assertion, and then an

argument. The assertion is, that Christianity is set up for the exclusive benefit of our minute and solitary world. The argument is, that God would not lavish such a quantity of attention on so insignificant a field." p. 44.

What is meant by quantity of attention is indicated on p. 56. Andover edition.

"Such a humble portion of the universe as ours, could never have been the object of such high and distinguishing attentions as Christianity has assigned to it. God would not have manifested himself in the flesh for the salvation of so paltry a world. The monarch of a whole continent would never move from his capital, and lay aside the splendour of royalty; and subject himself for months, or for years, to perils, and poverty, and persecution; and take up his abode in some small islet of his dominions, which, though swallowed by an earthquake, could not be missed amid the glories of so wide an empire; and all this to regain the lost affections of a few families upon its surface. And neither would the eternal Son of God—he who is revealed to us as having made all words, and as holding an empire, amid the splendours of which the globe that we inherit, is shaded in insignificance; neither would he strip himself of the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and light on this lower scene, for the purpose imputed to him in the New Testament. Impossible, that the concerns of this puny ball, which floats its little round among an infinity of larger worlds, should be of such mighty account in the plans of the Eternal, or should have given birth in heaven to so wonderful a movement, as the Son of God putting on the form of our degraded species, and sojourning among us, and sharing in all our infirmities, and crowning the whole scene of humiliation, by the disgrace and agonies of a cruel martyrdom." pp. 56, 57.

In the following very characteristic passage similar thoughts occur.

"In like manner did the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, surrounded as he is with the splendours of a wide and everlasting monarchy, turn him to our humble habitation; and the footsteps of God manifest in the flesh, have been on the narrow spot of ground we occupy; and small though our mansion be, amid the orbs and the systems of immensity, hither the King of glory bent his mysterious way, and entered the tabernacle of men, and in the disguise of a servant did he sojourn for years under the roof which canopies our obscure and solitary world. Yes, it is but a twinkling atom in the peopled infinity of worlds that are around it—but look to the moral grandeur of the transaction, and not to the material extent of the field upon which it was executed—and from the retirement of our dwelling-place, there may issue forth such a display of the Godhead, as will circulate the glories of his name among all his worshippers. Here sin entered. Here was the kind and universal beneficence of a Father, repaid by the ingratitude of a whole family. Here the law of God was dishonoured, and that too in the face of its proclaimed and unalterable sanctions. Here the mighty contest of the attributes was ended—and when justice put forth his demands, and truth called for the fulfilment of its warnings, and the immutability of God would not recede by a single iota, from any one of its positions, and all the severities he had ever uttered against the children of iniquity, seemed to gather into one cloud of threatening vengeance on the tenement that held us—did the visit of the only-begotten Son chase away all these obstacles to the triumph of mercy—and humble as the tenement may be, deeply shaded in the obscurity of insignificance as it is, among the statelier mansions which

are on every side of it—yet will the recal of its exiled family never be forgotten—and the illustration that has been given here, of the mingled grace and majesty of God, will never lose its place among the themes and acclamations of eternity." pp. 88, 99.

He speaks p. 83, of the dignity, justice, and wisdom of God, being put to a trial, and afterwards "of the lustre of the God-head being obscured." p. 120.

We believe that this objection so far as it has any force, only adds one other difficulty to a false theology. It affects not the revelation of the New Testament, but a certain set of dogmas, to which, as we believe, our Saviour never gave his sanction, which were unknown to the evangelists and apostles and their immediate followers; but which spring up in the hot and murky night of religious controversy. We refer to the doctrine of the Trinity, and the other doctrines connected with it, in their purest or most absurd form, in which they assert the mysterious union of Three co-equal and co-eternal Persons, absolutely distinct, yet essentially the same; one of which Persons may be said (though to be sure without meaning what is said) to have suffered on the cross, in the person of the Saviour; and to have thus suffered for the sins of men. Now the objection of the unbeliever is founded altogether on the character of that Being, to whom this work of atonement is ascribed. He alleges, that it is incredible that the eternal God, in and through whom all things subsist, whose equal and impartial care extends to systems vast and numberless beyond all comprehension,—that the Infinite Spirit should clothe himself in flesh, come upon our earth, submit to contumely, pain, and death, for the sake of making satisfaction to his own justice, and delivering men, or rather some portion of men, we know not how small, on this little speck in the universe, from the effects of the sin of their first ancestor, which he had himself before inflicted on the whole race. Now when thus stated we confess we feel the full force of the objection; as it is directed against a doctrine which does indeed stagger all belief and baffle all comprehension.

And let it not be said, that this is an exploded doctrine, an absurdity which has had its reign and is dead, which no one at the present day presumes to advocate. It is a prevalent doctrine, a popular doctrine, a doctrine, for disbelieving which rational christians are stigmatized as heretics in this world, and are delivered over to the endless tortures of the world to come. We know indeed, that they who hold this doctrine, though at one time they are ready to affirm that God suffered on the cross, (language which seems to us not far from being at once the most horrible and the most absurd which ever proceeded from the

lips of men) yet when pressed more closely, allow that only the human nature of Christ suffered. Their system, however, requires something more. For if it do not, how was that pleenary atonement made for the sins of the world, which they consider necessary, and how is God's infinite abhorrence of sin manifested? Could this be effected by the sacrifice of a mere man? And if they talk of the efficacy of the connexion of this man Christ Jesus, with the second person in the Trinity, let them define this connexion in any intelligible language, that they may know on what they rest their faith, and that we may know of what they speak.

The whole weight of the objection which we are considering, resting, as we have said, on the character of that Being who made the atonement;—it has less and less weight against every form of this Protean doctrine of the schools, as it has been modified to outrage less and less the text of scripture and the plain inferences of common sense. We, as Unitarians, have no concern with it—it cannot be urged against our apprehensions of gospel truths; for we do not believe that the Infinite God, or any coequal with him, suffered contumely and death for a sinful world. We believe that our Almighty Father sent a divinely inspired messenger, the Son of his love, to reveal what unassisted human reason never could otherwise have known,—to give motives and aids to a virtuous course of life, and by his precepts, example, death and resurrection, to prepare for us the way to heaven. Is there any thing in this message of love, which our God hath vouchsafed, which jeopardizes his care of other worlds than ours? Does it not comport with our best apprehensions of the Deity? May not this divine errand have been accomplished, without any desertion of the throne of Omnipotence; or any infringement of the attributes of the Deity? Whether other worlds required an equivalent blessing, whether a message as benignant may have been sent to them, is an inquiry altogether irrelative as it regards us; it is not imposed on us by any doctrines which we adopt; we have no facts on which to found an argument; and it must be in the highest degree unnecessary and unphilosophical to pursue such an investigation, until we are made acquainted with the moral state of the unnumbered worlds around us.

But as we have seen, this objection is of no trifling importance to another class of Christians, and we proceed to sketch as briefly as we can, the answer which Dr. C. has given.

The existence of a countless multitude of worlds is not, by any means, attempted to be denied. On the contrary, in a very spirited sketch of modern astronomy, in the first discourse, the author exults, as every devout man must in this grand illustra-

tion of the attributes of the Deity. After much irrelevant matter in the second discourse, and irksome repetition with regard to Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. C. in the first place attempts to show, that the position which is the basis of the unbelievers argument "that christianity is *set up* for the single benefit of this earth, is unauthorized,—that it is a mere assumption, to use his own words, it is "an assertion which has no feet to rest upon." In the third discourse this assertion is, for the sake of argument, admitted, and the inference, that "God would not lavish such attention upon so insignificant a field," is considered. He premises, that the objection "goes to expunge a perfection from the character of God."

"When we are taught by astronomy, that he has millions of worlds to look after, and thus add in one direction to the glories of his character; we take away from them in another, by saying, that each of these worlds must be looked after imperfectly. The use that we make of a discovery, which should heighten our every conception of God, and humble us into the sentiment, that a Being of such mysterious elevation is to us unfathomable, is to sit in judgment over him, aye, and to pronounce such a judgment as degrades him, and keeps him down to the standard of our own paltry imagination! We are introduced by modern science to a multitude of other suns and of other systems; and the perverse interpretation we put upon the fact, that God *can* diffuse the benefits of his power and of his goodness over such a variety of worlds, is, that he *cannot*, or will not, bestow so much goodness on one of those worlds, as a professed revelation from heaven has announced to us. While we enlarge the provinces of his empire, we tarnish all the glory of this enlargement, by saying, he has so much to care for, that the care of every one province must be less complete, and less vigilant, and less effectual, than it would otherwise have been." p. 60.

The Doctor then, to use again his own words, "has a quarrel with the argument," and meets the objection of the unbeliever by the position, that God in attending to one part of his works, need not neglect the rest. This very plain and simple truth is most profusely illustrated by an appeal to the personal history of every individual, to the discoveries of the telescope which makes known a "system in every star," and to those of the microscope which exhibit a "world in every atom."

In all this, Dr. C. labours to prove what nobody doubts, and what is nothing to the purpose. It is not a question whether the equal and constant care of God do not extend to this world. This none ever thought of denying. But the question is, whether the doctrine of the incarnation of God, for the purpose of making atonement for the sins of men, is not the invention of those who fancied themselves the principal beings in the material universe, and who were altogether ignorant of their probable relative importance? Whether the mind do not revolt from

it at once when we have just views of his character and of the extent of his works? Whether it do not suppose a tremendous waste of machinery to effect a certain purpose, its connexion with which cannot be explained in intelligible language?

But Dr. C. has felt himself authorized to maintain, that the "redemption of man extends in important relations to other parts of the universe." And he declares,

"The informations of the Bible upon this subject, are of two sorts—that from which we confidently gather the fact, that the history of the redemption of our species is known in other and distant places of the creation—and that, from which we indistinctly guess at the fact, that the redemption itself may stretch beyond the limits of the world we occupy." p. 78.

The subjects of the fourth, fifth and sixth discourses are "*The knowledge of man's moral history in the distant places of the creation ;*" on the "*sympathy that is felt for man in the distant places of the creation ;*" and "*on the contest for an ascendancy over man, among the higher orders of intelligence.*" It will be enough to many of our readers to have mentioned the title of these discourses. We shall not attempt to give any analysis of them. We may say in general, that they are made up of the wildest hypotheses, and fancy-flights that we ever have known to proceed from the pulpit. They transgress almost every rule of investigation which Dr. C. is constantly insisting upon, and which in the second discourse particularly, he urged to repletion ;—they are precisely of that bold assuming character, which mark the objection, that he is attempting to refute. Finally they rest, as we think, upon almost no scriptural authority, certainly upon a few phrases which are, among the most indefinite in the bible, and are easily susceptible of a different, and, as we think, a better interpretation. There is indeed nothing more remarkable, as it respects the substance of these discourses, than an ambitious oft-repeated recommendation of the cautious, humble spirit of true philosophy, standing in strong contrast with continual transgressions of its most obvious requirements. In the sixth discourse, for instance, there is a glowing description of a battle of superior beings for man; God and the Son and good spirits on the one hand, and Satan and the powers of darkness on the other. Though "he (Dr. C.) will not affect a wisdom above that which is written, by fancying such detail of the warfare as the Bible has not laid before him" yet he *can say*,

—"that it was the hour and the power of darkness ; that the work of our redemption was a work accompanied by the effort, and the violence, and the fury of a combat ; by all the arduousness of a battle in its progress, and all the glories of a victory in its termination." p. 121.

That the conflict

—“decided a question of *rivalship* between the righteous and everlasting monarch of universal being, and the prince of a great and widely extended rebellion.” p. 122.

Does Dr. C. believe this? It is indeed a poor flourish of rhetoric if he do not. Is he then a Manichæan? Is all this said in the spirit of a cautious philosophy? Does he not know that every single text on which he relies, admits a more rational interpretation—better on this account, if on none other, that it does not debase all our necessary apprehensions of God, that it does not shock all our holiest feelings of devotion? For ourselves, we are free to declare, that we consider such wild excursions neither profitable nor safe. God has seen fit to envelope the œconomy of the world of spirits in an awful mystery, and has revealed only in general terms enough to give sanctions to his laws, and grounds for our hope. We believe it to be our duty to take the plain declarations of his word for our guidance and support, gratefully walking in the heavenly light, when it is vouchsafed, and meekly acquiescent when it is withholden.

The concluding discourse of the astronomical series is devoted to a consideration “of the slender influence of mere taste and sensibility in matters of religion.” The leading thought, which runs through the whole, is very just and important. We are very apt to substitute some of the accompaniments of devotion in the place of devotion. But it is, as we think, quite a bald and embarrassed performance. We recommend in preference, infinitely in preference, the most able and eloquent Essay of Foster, on the same subject; though this latter proceeds on views of religion, to which it will not be supposed we give our full assent.

It is unnecessary to speak particularly of the remaining sermons, and addresses in both volumes. They all inculcate what we deem a false theology. “The doctrine,” as is observed in the preface of the second volume, “which is most urgently, and most frequently insisted on in the following pages is that of the depravity of human nature.”

“He knows, in particular, that throughout these discourses there is a frequent recurrence of the same idea, though generally expressed in different language, and with some new specialty, either in its bearing or in its illustration. And he further knows, that the habit of expatiating on one topic may be indulged to such a length as to satiate the reader, and that, to a degree, far beyond the limits of his forbearance.” p. ix.

We admit this to be our case. Indeed there is little else in the volume than the repetition of this doctrine, with its necessary consequences. While we regret that such erroneous and gloomy dogmas should be preached at all, and particularly by

men of such efficient minds and of such ardent feelings as Dr. C., we are aware that they do not always produce their legitimate effect—entire scepticism, or a melancholy fanaticism. There is in strong and healthy minds, and in the natural biases of the heart, a reaction against such bad and debasing doctrines of God and religion. Such men will not suffer the manna which God has given, to be changed to poison: they will be good and happy in spite of the speculative faith which is imposed upon them. Besides, this kind of preaching may sometimes be beneficial. Even “curst ungodliness of zeal,” may be better than a total indifference to all religion. Such preaching may sometimes serve as an engine to check resolute wickedness, or break down stubborn worldliness. It may sometimes be the pioneer to an enlightened and rational Christianity. As a new soil is subdued by fire, so a flaming zeal and hot religion may sometimes tame the rugged and wild characters of men. And when the mind has been by this progress in some degree ameliorated, better and milder dispositions gain root and flourish; until by judicious culture, the thorns and briars of prejudice are removed, a kindlier soil is gathered on the surface of the soul, the dews of heaven descend and soften and fertilize it, and at last spring up the good fruits of a heavenly temper and religious life.

We proceed to the second part of the duty which we prescribed ourselves, and shall examine as briefly as we can, the literary merit of these far-famed sermons. It is difficult to characterize distinctly, the style in which they are written. We may say in general that it is marked by almost all the faults of an ambitious kind. It is most unsparingly diffuse, it abounds with every species of amplification—with periphrasis, tautology and gross pleonasm; it is in places inflated but not sustained; it is very gairish and abounds with a painful blazonry of expression, which often puts in strong contrast the hazy obscurity of thought. All this is interspersed with Scoticisms, new-coined words, or new combinations of old ones, continual inaccuracies in the use of those established, an habitual preference of long words, a needless multiplication of epithets, sins against grammar;—and all this medley of literary abominations brought to a close, after being drawn out into sentences longer than any body’s patience, by a tuneful recitativo of some favorite expression. There is besides an industrious artizanship in the manufacture of phrases, especially, as is not unfrequently the case, when a common thought is attempted to be expressed with emphasis, or an emptiness of all meaning to be covered up with verbiage. We need not add that there is a total want of all simplicity, directness, flexibility, and easy elegance of

style, of all chasteness of expression, and of every thing resembling a pure English idiom.

We would gladly be excused from citing any examples in proof of these remarks. It is an irksome business, but it were wrong to make such general observations upon the style of one of the most popular pulpit orators of our time, without giving some examples in proof of what we have asserted. We must be allowed however to do as little as we may.

The following passage, which we quote entire, will we think afford a tolerable specimen of tautology. One very obvious idea, in this short extract, is repeated, if we have counted right, seven or eight times; and it is said over and over again in the remainder of this and the subsequent discourses. There is at least one grammatical error in the phrase "slumbering a reverie," and an affected use of language in the expressions "*all eloquence*," "*all habit*" and "*all fancy*."

"But while he gets all his credit, and all his admiration for those articles of science which he had added to the creed of philosophers, *he deserves as much credit and admiration for those articles which he kept out of his creed, as for those which he introduced into it.* It was the property of his mind, that it kept a tenacious hold of every one position which had proof to substantiate it—but it forms a property equally characteristic, and which, in fact, gives its leading peculiarity to the whole spirit and style of his investigations, that he put a most determined exclusion on every one position that was destitute of such proof. He would not admit the astronomical theories of those who went before him, because they had no proof. He would not give in to their notions about the planets wheeling their rounds in whirlpools of ether—for he did not see this ether—he had no proof of its existence—and, besides, even supposing it to exist, it would not have impressed on the heavenly bodies, such movements as met his observation. He would not submit his judgment to the reigning systems of the day—for, though they had authority to recommend them, they had no proof; and thus it is, that he evinced the strength and the soundness of his philosophy, as much by his decisions upon those doctrines of science which he rejected, as by his demonstration of those doctrines of science which he was the first to propose, and which now stand out to the eye of posterity as the only monuments to the force and superiority of his understanding.

"He wanted no other recommendation for any one article of science, than the recommendation of evidence—and, with this recommendation, he opened to it the chamber of his mind, though authority scowled upon it, and taste was disgusted by it, and fashion was ashamed of it, and all the beauteous speculation of former days was cruelly broken up by this new announcement of the better philosophy, and scattered like the fragments of an aerial vision, over which the past generations of the world had been *slumbering their profound and their pleasing reverie.* But, on the other hand, should the article of science want the recommendation of evidence, he shut against it all the avenues of his understanding—aye, and though all antiquity lent their suffrages to it, and all eloquence had thrown around it the most attractive brilliancy, and all habit had incorporated it with every system of every seminary in Europe, and all fancy had arrayed it in graces of the most tempting solicitation; yet was the steady and inflexible mind of Newton proof against this whole weight of authority and allurements, and,

casting his cold and unwelcome look at the specious plausibility, he rebuked it from his presence. *The strength of his philosophy lay as much in refusing admittance to that which wanted evidence, as in giving a place and an occupancy to that which possessed it.* In that march of intellect, which led him onwards through the rich and magnificent field of his discoveries, he pondered every step; and while he advanced with a firm and assured movement, wherever the light of evidence carried him, he never suffered any glare of imagination or of prejudice to seduce him from his path." pp. 36—38.

But to proceed to a few more particulars. Here follow some examples of pleonasm, arising from an attempt to write better than well. "*Unpeopled solitude.*" p. 15. "*All the establishment of a conclusive demonstration,*" 36. "*There lies the profoundness of an unsearchable latency.*" 76. "*Practical doing?*" 138. The list were easily extended.

We have said that the style though inflated is not sustained. A few examples may make our meaning plain. A long series of turgid phrases is intermingled with some colloquial or mean expression. The use of the word "Aye" (ay) is the common bond of union to the almost interminable sentences, and has sometimes a ludicrous effect. Such expressions too as the following are any thing but dignified. "*All should be above boards*" p. 72. "*tell on the moral destinies of mankind,*" in the sense of *operate on*, p. 100. "*blow the argument to pieces,*" p. 91. "*Tack our faith.*" 76. "*Looking with half an eye.*" "*All heaven in a stir.*" 98. "*biggest outrage.*" 102. "*text looks hard upon him.*" 129. "*blink a question.*" 71. "*mince ambiguous scepticism,*" 86. "*would not recede by a single iota*" 89.

The obscurity is sometimes very dense. Amidst the cloud of words, the glimmering of the idea is hardly perceptible. This results sometimes from loose thinking, but chiefly from a redundancy of words. We have room for only single sentences. "*Now the question is not how these would conduct themselves in such circumstances? but how should they do it?*" p. 11. What?—"Oh had the philosophers of the day known as well as their great master, how to *draw the vigorous landmark which verges the field of legitimate discovery,* they should (would) have seen," &c. 77. "*a gleam of malignant joy shot athwart him as he conceived his project for hemming our unfortunate species within the bound of an irrecoverable dilemma,*" 119, meaning, by interpretation, probably, a dilemma from which recovery was impossible.

"Aye, and it would put them on the stretch of all their faculties, when they saw rebellion lifting up its standard against the Majesty of heaven, and the truth and justice of God embarked on the threatenings he had uttered against all the doers of iniquity, and the honours of that august throne, which has the firm pillars of immutability to rest upon, linked with the fulfilment of the law that had come out of it." pp. 81, 82.

Sometimes we may not hope to find a meaning. "It must have poured a *tide of exuberancy* (of what is not said) through all its provinces." 94. "Man feels himself treading on the limits of his helplessness." p. 147. "He is told of the multitude of worlds, and he feels a *kindling magnificence* in the conception, and he is *seduced by an elevation which he cannot carry*, and from this airy summit (we suppose of the elevation by which he is *seduced* and cannot carry) does he look down on the insignificance of the world we occupy." p. 96.

We give one or two specimens of what we have called artizanship of style. A temperate use of these forms of phrase, may not be very objectionable, but become wearisome when they occur on every page. A thought, which in an unbroken state, and simply expressed might have some force and effect is frittered into as many parts as possible, and each supplied with an epithet.

"But is it not adding to the bright catalogue of his other attributes, to say, that, while magnitude does not overpower him, minuteness cannot escape him, and variety cannot bewilder him; and that, at the very time while the mind of the Deity is abroad over the whole vastness of creation, there is not one particle of matter, there is not one individual principle of rational or of animal existence, there is not one single world in that expanse which teems with them, that his eye does not discern as constantly, and his hand does not guide as unerringly, and his spirit does not watch and care for us as vigilantly, as if it formed the one and exclusive object of his attention." pp. 59, 60.

"He can attend as fully and provide as richly, and manifest his attributes as illustriously on every one of these objects." p. 61.

—"he may be made to feel with such an emotion, and to weep with such a tenderness, and to kindle with such a transport, and to glow with such an elevation, as may one and all carry upon them the semblance of sacredness." p. 127.

Another process of making sentences, which is equally a favorite one with Dr. C. is to change the epithet into a substantive, and put the substantive in regimen. "Earnestness of regards." "totality of existence" "preciousness of application" and many more.

Here follow some specimens of grammatical solecisms and offences against English. "Images dazzle upon the eye." "Heaven rings jubilee." "I cannot tell what the battle that he fought." "He strives a penetrating vision." "It looks (in the sense of appears) to the man of science." "It looks another to the voluptuary." "condescend upon." "go to aliment." New York edition. p. 242.

A rythmical termination like the *esse videatur* of Cicero, is given to the sentences very often, as for example by such combinations as the following. "loveliness of the song." pp.

128, 132, 143, 146. And "busy population" "mighty population" "guilty population" "world's population" (very often repeated) "repentant population" "teeming population" "neglected population."

Passing, without more particular notice, the Scotch use of the word *just* used for only, or merely, for example "to theorize is *just* making a departure," &c. the frequent use of the words *should* for *would*, and *shall* for *will*, which is not peculiar to Scotland, and the unnecessary use of the words *every*, and the misuse of *one* and *alone* for *only*, as in these expressions "it formed the *one* object of his attention," "Truth is the *alone* idol of his reverence;" and passing by also the tedious affixes to common words, we offer a few specimens of words of a new coinage: such as *residential*, *honesties*, *integrities*, *rebelliousness*, *baselessness*, *exhaustlessness*, *profoundness*, *untaintedness*, *defencelessness*, *strenuousness*, *preciousness*, *powerlessness*, *virtuousness*, *versant*, *argumentable*, *unfallen*, *disposited*, *charioted*.

But we are weary of this work—In the words of Persius

——— "unde hæc sartago loquendi,
Venerit in linguas?

We have dwelt longer on the literary character of these writings, than, with regard to common discourses from the pulpit, would be either expedient or allowable. A spirit of criticism on this subject is ever in danger of excess. But these discourses have gained a popularity unprecedented in late years; and certainly they are remarkable for nothing but their style. On this account it seemed to demand of us unusual attention. Examples of gross faults might easily have been multiplied, and those who have read these volumes, will not think that we have been lavish of reprehension.

But we have been induced to indulge in these remarks by other considerations. We consider such gorgeous declamation as this, particularly reprehensible when it is delivered from the sacred desk. To use the emphatic language of Dr. C. with a slight alteration, "it is a piece of parading insignificance altogether—the minister playing on his favourite instrument, and the people dissipating away their time on the charm and idle luxury of a theatrical emotion." How are the great objects of christian preaching to be effected? not, surely, by mere splendid diction, rhetorical flourish, parade of language, or by any or all of the artifices of style:—these are but sound in brass and tinkling cymbal:—but by plain expositions of duty, by direct, close, serious, hortatory and pathetic sermons—which will strike directly on the heart and pierce and melt it. In making these remarks, we do not mean to express a doubt either of the talents or sincerity of Dr. C. He is a writer of very considerable
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rable endowments, and of such a character as is likely to make him an example to many. We have therefore thought it the more necessary to point out distinctly his errors. For it is to be feared that the race of imitators, "*qui aut ea, quæ facilia sunt, aut etiam illa, quæ insignia ac pene vitiosa, consecretantur, imitando,*" may content themselves with the imperfections of their model, and mistake the pomp of words for the natural language of a raised and excited mind.

But while we consider the general style of these discourses as almost the worst, which we have read, we are not unconscious that there are some exceptions. Amid their tinsel and gaudiness, there is sometimes to be found a gem of price:—in the intervals of a lumbering sonorousness of phrase the voice of real eloquence may sometimes be heard. This seems to verify the remark of Quintilian—"inde evenit nonnunquam, ut *aliquod grande inveniat qui semper querit quod nimium est.*" But it is a dangerous method, for, as the same great critic adds, "*verum raro evenit et certa vitia non pensat.*" We do not remember a better example than the following, in which the language, though rather swelling, is balanced and kept steady by the weight of the thought.

"The contemplation has no limits. If we ask the number of suns and of systems, the unassisted eye of man can take in a thousand, and the best telescope which the genius of man has constructed can take in eighty millions. But why subject the dominions of the universe to the eye of man, or to the powers of his genius? Fancy may take its flight far beyond the ken of eye or of telescope. It may expatiate in the outer regions of all that is visible—and shall we have the boldness to say, that there is nothing there? that the wonders of the Almighty are at an end, because we can no longer trace his footsteps? that his omnipotence is exhausted, because human art can no longer follow him? that the creative energy of God has sunk into repose, because the imagination is enfeebled by the magnitude of its efforts, and can keep no longer on the wing through those mighty tracts, which shoot far beyond what eye hath seen, or the heart of man hath conceived—which sweep endlessly along, and merge into an awful and mysterious infinity?" pp. 23, 24.

What, it may be asked, if the style of these discourses is so objectionable, constituted their remarkable fascination? We answer, that we do not know. So far as immediate effect is concerned, some of those very faults of style to which we have adverted, its sounding words, its boldness and contempt of the common forms and rules of speech, may have had an influence. Something too should be attributed to those specimens of real eloquence, which are found at long intervals in these performances, like clear and grassy resting places in a tangled wilderness;—something to the religious dogmas insisted upon which, though in our opinion, unsound to the very core,

are susceptible of being stated in an imposing manner, and must have an awful effect on those who believe them to be true. But probably the chief effect of these sermons depended on the peculiar elocution of the speaker, and particularly on his earnestness, self-conviction, and temporary enthusiasm. God has set his mark upon sincerity, and the language of the heart never yet fell cold and dead upon the ear. Real feeling has a persuasiveness above all power of words, and which even gross faults of style cannot wholly stifle. It is heard in the tone, it is seen in the lifting of a finger, in the glance of the eye, in the trembling of a muscle, in the irradiation of the face. Deep emotion will always radiate, and sympathy will kindle and spread in every heart like wildfire.

ARTICLE IX.

On Doing Good to the Poor. A Sermon preached at Pittsfield, (Mass.) on the day of the annual fast April 4, 1818.

By HEMAN HUMPHREY, Pastor of the congregational Church in that town. Pittsfield : Phineas Allen. pp. 46. 1818.

A Discourse delivered at the opening of the new Almshouse in Cambridge, 17th September, 1818. By ABIEL HOLMES, D. D. Pastor of the First Church in Cambridge. Cambridge ; Hilliard and Metcalf, 1819. pp. 40.

THERE is nothing which so clearly denotes the admirable influence of the Christian religion in cherishing and developing the most amiable traits of the human character, as the extent and variety of the charitable institutions, which exist in all Christian countries ; and more particularly in those where the moral principles of the religion are properly understood, and fully valued. There is no form of poverty or disease, no shape in which human misery can appear, but a hand is stretched out to support, and a home provided to receive and shelter. There seems in fact to be almost an exuberance of these benevolent feelings ; the means of charity, especially among us, exceed the necessities of those upon whom they might be worthily and judiciously expended ; the suffering often have hardly to seek relief, but are rather sought out as the subjects for the exercise of the feelings of the benevolent.

Not that we consider this as the most desirable channel in which these affections should be made to flow. The good that is done in this way, is by no means in proportion to the good that is intended. Injudicious charity has probably been productive of far more ultimate evil, than the coldest and most in-

discriminating selfishness. There are few who know how to distribute alms with discretion, for there are few who have an opportunity to acquire the requisite knowledge with regard to the general character of mankind, or that of particular individuals. But benevolent institutions and private charities indicate the excellent influence of our religion, not so much because a great deal of good is thus actually effected with regard to those who are their subjects; but because they show the operation which it has had upon the feelings, affections, and character of society in general. And although these affections may be injudiciously displayed, these benevolent tendencies exercised on unworthy objects, in an unworthy manner, and finally be productive of more harm than good; yet this state of the human character, does not the less denote the genuine effect of that religion, whose essence is love. Great as are the imperfections which remain in our character as christians, still if we compare the temper and spirit of our own times, allowing for every exception, with those of a few centuries ago, we cannot but be grateful for the changes which have been wrought, and look forward with delightful anticipation to those which are to come.

But there has been, we believe, and there is, a radical defect in the principles by which most if not all our institutions for the poor have been regulated, and by which we have proceeded in the exercise of private charity. We are too anxious to be always giving. This, we are apt to believe, is the very essence of benevolence, but we think nothing of endeavouring to *prevent the necessity of giving*. That indeed is one of the most heavenly feelings of which we are capable, which proceeds from the consciousness, that we have relieved or alleviated the suffering of a fellow-creature. Yet how much better a cause were it for such happy sensations, could we prevent this suffering and ward off the attacks of want and disease. How preposterous, nay, how barbarous would it seem, in any individual instance, coolly to permit the evil to be inflicted, and then crowd forward with consolation and assistance. Yet this is what is daily done; it is what our legal provisions, our public institutions, our private charities, are constantly doing. To the destitute, they proffer relief; to him who is already fallen, they hold out the hand of assistance; but to the multitude of those who are travelling onwards through the paths of improvidence and vice to the same termination, they pay no regard; they are permitted, they are encouraged in their improvidence, in their vice, by the certainty that they will never be left to want.

There would probably have been less poverty and less misery in the world, had no charitable institutions ever existed. Yet in

the present state of society their abolition were impossible, since the necessity of their existence has been accumulating for ages. It would be happy, if some revolution could be effected in the mode in which we are accustomed to assist the destitute portion of mankind. As they exist, public institutions operate too much as premiums upon indolence, improvidence and vice. The virtuous, the industrious, the unfortunate poor, who have surely the highest claim upon our feelings, obtain but a small share of our bounty. Look at our almshouses! They are the receptacles of the exhausted drunkard, the ruined gamester, the worn out prostitute, the illegitimate offspring of debauchery and licentiousness; not the asylums of the destitute widow, the deserted orphan, the decayed and unfortunate labourer. We find the grey head—but it is hoary with iniquity and depravity—with the premature old age of intemperance and lewdness; not with the silver hairs of honest virtue, not with the reverend locks of ancient and industrious poverty. On these we might bestow our alms with an open hand, a free heart, and feel proud that we could so exercise the noblest affections of our nature. Such mercy were doubly blessed in him that gave and him that received; for there is the exercise of the same benevolent feelings in worthily receiving as in worthily giving. But how little disposition should we feel for self-gratulation, did we know that our bounty was operating as the reward of vice and indolence; that it was received with unthankfulness and wasted in extravagance.

Our age is distinguished for projects of liberal and practical benevolence beyond any other. The abolition of the slave trade, the more general diffusion of religious knowledge, the efforts for the banishment of the custom of war, and the various institutions for the relief and the education of the poor, are noble evidences of this enlightened spirit of philanthropy. And it is not the least subject of congratulation, that more correct and enlarged views of the nature of true benevolence, and of the modes by which its objects are best effected, are beginning to prevail. That short-sighted kind of charity is going out of repute, which confines its views to the relief of immediate necessity, but does not extend them to the prevention of future want.

In the sermons of Dr Holmes and Mr. Humphrey, this subject has received a full and interesting consideration. They are both from the same text, and are strikingly similar in their general construction, and in the topics which are taken up. The discourse of Dr. Holmes is a chaste, clear, and accurate composition, and exhibits a concise and satisfactory view of the causes and methods of preventing poverty; that of Mr. Hum-

phrey abounds in striking views with respect to the same subjects, but in a more loose and careless form, and presents in a strong light, the evils which at present exist, though frequently in a coarse and somewhat ungracious manner.

Idleness, improvidence, intemperance, are regarded by both as the principal causes of the increase in the number of the poor. That an individual, in this country, is obliged to throw himself upon the public for support, is at first sight a reason for believing that he is an indolent, improvident, or vicious member of society. There can be little doubt, that in a country like ours, every one, misfortunes being out of the question, may support himself and family through life in decency and comfort, provided he regularly endeavours to do it. It requires no extraordinary exertion;—common industry, common frugality will be sufficient. But in the lower classes there is too little regard paid to the future. They are entirely ignorant of the art of living cheaply and economically. Luxuries, if they have the present means of obtaining them, are indulged in, without reflecting that if they are extravagant to-day, they must be straitened to-morrow; and it is not unfrequent to find the rarities of the season on the table of a day labourer, when their price would exclude them from almost all but those of the rich. This improvident, extravagant disposition is a cause of the extreme want to which families are frequently reduced who depend upon daily labour for support, and generally maintain themselves in tolerable comfort. Labour is not always to be had. There are particular seasons of the year, especially in a place like this, when there is little to be done, and this unfortunately is at the very time when the expenses of living are the greatest, and when the full produce of daily labour would be no more than sufficient for daily want. At this period the pressure of poverty is particularly felt, and there are few of the lowest class who do not require some degree of assistance from public or private benevolence. At other seasons, there is generally sufficient employment, and the income of an industrious labourer amounts to more than is absolutely necessary for the support of his family. Yet the surplus is never laid by for future need. It is always spent; and too often in a manner that contributes still more to the impoverishment of the individual.

The authors of the publications before us, in common with all who have thought or written upon this subject, attribute by far the greatest share of the burden of pauperism to the vices, and more particularly to the intemperance, which are prevalent among the lower ranks of the community. We have touched in a former number upon this subject, but it appears to us, one, which can hardly be too frequently or too forcibly pressed upon

on the attention of the public. It would be astonishing, to those who are not familiar with certain classes of people, to witness the extent to which such practices have advanced, the very venial light in which they are viewed, the little shame or compunction which the drunkard feels, and the very trifling nature of the disgrace which is attached to the habit, by a considerable majority of mankind. They would be shocked at the lessons thus instilled by example in the minds of the young, who even on the threshold of existence, are taught to tread the paths of iniquity without knowing them to be such, and blast at once, by loathsome and incurable vice, all the prospects of their future lives.

"Our own observation may convince us,"—says Dr. Holmes—"and the records of our Almshouses will prove, that this single vice generally contributes incomparably more than any, I had almost said than all, other, towards the increase of the objects of public charity. No cause is so closely, and for the most part infallibly connected with the effect. The intemperate man is seldom reclaimed from his intemperance, the consequences of which are as certain, as they are pernicious." p. 11.

"Intemperance"—observes Mr. Humphrey after enumerating various other causes which bring individuals upon the public for their support,— "is by far the greatest and most horrible of all the causes of pauperism in this country. If other vices slay their thousands, this slays its tens of thousands." "There can be no question, that it sends crowds to hell every year, while it also consigns an incredible number of bloated masses of pollution, and of broken-hearted wives and helpless children, to rags and beggary. The extent of its ravages would exceed all credence, were we not furnished with facts and estimates, which cannot be controverted."

"In the forepart of 1816, it was stated in the report of the *Moral Society* of Portland, that out of 85 persons supported at the work-house, in that town, 71 became paupers, in consequence of intemperance; being *five-sixths* of the whole number: and that out of 118, who were supplied at their own houses, more than half were of that character."

"Again in the winter of 1817, alarmed by the rapid increase of pauperism, the citizens of New York appointed a very respectable committee, to inquire into the state of want and misery among the poor in that city, and to devise some plan to prevent, as far as possible, a recurrence and increase of these evils. A part of the report of this committee, is in the following words."

"If we recur to the state of the poor from year to year, for ten years past, we find that they have yearly increased greatly beyond the regular increase of population. At the present period, there is reason to believe, from information received from the visiting committees of the several wards, that 15,000 men, women, and children, equal to *one-seventh* of the whole population of our city, have been supported by public or private bounty or munificence.

"In viewing this deplorable state of human misery, the committee have diligently attended to an examination of the causes which have produced such dire effects. And after the most mature and deliberate reflection, they are satisfied, that the most prominent and alarming cause, is the free and inordinate use of spiritous liquors. To this cause alone may fairly be attributed seven eighths of the misery and distress of the present winter;

one sixteenth to the want of employment, owing to the present distressing state of trade and commerce ; and the remaining portion, to circumstances difficult to enumerate, and which possibly could not be avoided." pp. 14, 15.

A similar inquiry into the state and causes of pauperism in this metropolis, would we fear, terminate in a similar result. And if all this be true, if this evil has already arrived at such a height, and is daily increasing upon us ; does it not follow that the public provisions upon this subject, fail in the objects which they ought to attain ; that either our laws are not sufficient, or that there is some failure in their administration ? They merely remove out of sight those who are incapable of supporting themselves without any regard to the prevention of their farther accumulation. The privileges of the authorized institutions ought not to be granted upon such easy terms. There is always a certain quantity of floating charity, if we may use this expression, which is adequate to the support of a certain number of individuals, and there will always be claimants enough to appropriate all these means, and often indeed to produce a competition for them. But if the hand of the law is constantly removing those of them who have become troublesome to society, their places are regularly filled by an equal number who immediately fall into the ranks, and seek to partake of this easy subsistence. Every thing in society, finds at last about its proper level, and the proportion of those who depend upon private charity, for the whole or a part of their means of living, will always be equal to the quantity of the means to be disposed of.

Is it not actually the case, that we have a right fairly to ascribe no small proportion of the number of paupers to the poor laws themselves, or to the manner in which they are executed ? By removing to their public establishments those who are becoming a burden upon private charity, do they not actually make room for a new accession of numbers ? Are they not in fact one of the efficient causes of increasing pauperism ? Yet this is not so from an actual defect in the provisions, but from the want of energy in those whose duty it is to put them in force. They permit the subjects of their charge to lead too easy and idle a life. There is nothing in the life of the pauper to discourage those who are most likely to become such. It is true *we* are accustomed to view it with horror, but they have become, in some measure familiarized to the prospect. They look forward to it, indeed, as the last resort, but after all as a pretty comfortable one. They calculate upon a life without labour and without care, and such they too often find it. They cease to possess that pride in self-dependence, which has so much influence over mankind in general, and society thus loses the surest pledge for their upright and honorable conduct.

The effect of extensive charities and liberal laws for the maintenance of the poor, in producing an increase in their number, has been frequently remarked, but seems never to have been sufficiently taken into consideration, in the conduct and arrangement of alms-houses, asylums, &c. There can be no doubt of the indispensable necessity of such institutions in the present state of society ; yet it appears to us something might be done to obviate the injurious consequences to which they give rise.

Speaking of the provisions of the English government, Dr. Holmes observes—

“There is not a parish in the kingdom, but what is now obliged to maintain its own poor. Besides this legal provision, charitable institutions have become multiplied, providing for the relief of every class of human beings, and for every description of human misery. Even the most profligate and abandoned may there find an asylum. In no country, however, is mendicity more prevalent than in Great Britain ; in no city are beggars more numerous than in London.” “An intelligent writer, who had travelled much, and made observations in different countries, remarks ; ‘there is no country in the world, where so many provisions are established for the poor, so many hospitals to receive them when they are sick and lame, founded and maintained by voluntary charities ; so many alms-houses for the aged of both sexes, together with a solemn general law made by the rich to subject their estates to a heavy tax for the support of the poor, as in England ; yet there is no country in the world in which the poor are more idle and dissolute.’

“The provisions” Dr. H. goes on to observe, “appear to have been too extensive and too indiscriminate ; the facilities for admission to these charities, too great ; the condition of a claim to them, too easy ; and the treatment of the subjects of them such, as to counteract their original design, and actually to encourage idleness and vice. “You offered a premium”—says the writer just quoted, “and you should not now wonder it has had its effect in the increase of poverty.”—Of the same sentiment was Lord Kaimes—“A premium,” says that author, “is not more successful in any case than when given to promote idleness—In England every man is entitled to be idle ; because every idler is entitled to a maintenance.” p. 20, 21.

We ought certainly to bear it in mind, that if we are right in attributing poverty, for the most part, to misconduct—the most idle, useless, and vicious part of the community are actually supported out of the hard earnings of the industrious, the frugal, and the virtuous. It is perhaps hardly necessary to press this point upon the attention, by any thing more than this simple statement of the matter of fact ; yet we are desirous of quoting the homely but forcible representation given of it by Mr. Humphrey.

“Have you seriously thought of the subject in this light ? Do you consider, that almost every idler and drunkard in the community is a public
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pensioner ? Are you sensible, when you see men reducing their families to want, by tippling and its attendant vices, that you have got to pay four-fold, for all this waste of health, and time, and property ? Do you know, that while a man is drinking up his own estate, he is every day lessening the value of yours ? That while you stand by and look calmly on, he is actually laying a mortgage on every foot of your lands, which neither you nor your children can ever pay off ? Dram shops are kept up at your expense. The revenue of those who subsist by dealing out ardent spirits to hard drinkers, is indirectly drawn from your pockets. You will find it charged to you with heavy interest in the rate-book. The intemperate are constantly running you in debt without your consent. They are doing it from day to day when you are at work, and from night to night while you are asleep." p. 45.

In the treatment of the poor, when they become the subjects of public relief, it ought to be a ruling principle, to oblige them to support themselves, so far as it is possible, and in a considerable proportion of cases it is possible. There is no charity, no kindness, no justice, in providing an asylum, where a considerable proportion of the community, who are at least of doubtful character, are supported in indolence and ease at the expense of the sober and industrious. The majority of paupers become so, because they will not, not because they cannot, find labour for their subsistence—and if they are really disqualified from doing it, the difficulty has arisen from their own folly or vice, and they ought therefore to be taxed at least to the extent of their ability. Besides, it is probable, that in most of those cases, where vice has produced a bodily incapacity, a life of frugality and temperance, accompanied with so much labour as they are really adequate to bear, would gradually restore them to sufficient strength to work, at least for their own support. This course would no doubt be considered as cruel and harsh by the subjects themselves, and by many benevolent and well meaning people, who have no idea that there is any charity except where money is given. To the idle and intemperate it might seem a punishment, to be obliged to apply themselves to constant and regular employment, and denied those sensual gratifications, in which they had been accustomed to indulge. But even supposing it such—what better do they deserve ? Is not poverty when it proceeds from such causes, as truly a crime against society as robbery or theft ? Twenty-five thousand dollars—two thirds of the Almshouse expenses in this town—are devoted to the support of the intemperate and profligate, besides the immense sums which are distributed in various ways and from various sources, to those who are yet without the grasp of the poor laws. Do not vices, which make such a claim as this upon the public purse, deserve some more rigorous discipline than they have usually received ?

We were somewhat surprized to find, that our laws relating to these subjects are so full and so judicious, knowing how little is really done by those who have the charge of their execution. The appendix to Dr. Holmes' sermon, contains an address from the selectmen of the town of Cambridge to the citizens, in which we find a complete account of the laws of the commonwealth, accompanied by some extremely pertinent and sensible observations on the motives for their execution, and the proper method of treating the poor in general. They have given an example well worthy of imitation in the vigorous measures they have taken to carry the legal provisions into full effect, and the success, we learn, is such as their exertions so well deserved. It must undoubtedly be a more difficult undertaking to carry the same principles into operation in a place like this metropolis. The poor are in some respects of a different character from that which belongs to them in the country ; their comparative numbers are greater ; a larger proportion of them are vicious and profligate ; and there are, besides, among them, crowds of foreigners of the very worst description.

With such materials it is difficult to determine, what arrangements can be made, which shall give to all constant and suitable employment. There must be in a crowded city a competition for all kinds of labour even among those who are able and industrious ; and those occupations, which most naturally offer themselves for that class of subjects of whom we are speaking, are apt to have an unfavourable influence on their health and habits. To the cultivation of the soil, however, in the present state of our country, there are no limits, and this ought to be the resort of those who have crowded other occupations beyond their means of support, or who, from their misconduct or imprudence, have failed in obtaining a livelihood in their original pursuits. This in fact is the natural employment of man in his civilized state, and it is the foundation upon which all the other professions, which constitute the edifice of society, are reared.

We can only suggest the adoption of this expedient for the employment of the poor, as there may be objections which do not at present occur to us. It appears, however, to be recommended by some important considerations. But whatever methods may be devised, it ought to be an important part of any systematic attempt, not only to ameliorate the condition of the poor, but to raise the standard of character among them, to elevate their views, to keep them in remembrance—for too many seem inclined to forget it—that they have still some relation to human society, and are within the pale of social feeling ; above all, that they are still accountable moral agents to God as well as to man. There is a strange idea which seems frequent-

ly to take possession of the minds of this class of people, that they are considered by the world as outcasts ; that every thing which is afforded them, is given grudgingly, and slowly wrung from the unwilling hand of avarice. That it is given them because it is their right, and not from any motive of benevolence or compassion ; and they may therefore claim it without shame and receive it without gratitude. It would be difficult to eradicate such impressions from the minds of all, but something might gradually be done by employing only men of humane and liberal and enlightened feelings, in all the offices connected with their superintendence and government, and by carefully directing the education of those who are born into a state of poverty and dependence, or whose situations in life render them finally liable to the same fate.

Our views as to education, are perhaps, in general, too entirely confined to the literary acquisitions of the young, and not sufficiently to the influence, which a variety of circumstances may have in preparing them for the fortune they are to meet with in life. The original education of all children seems to us too much alike. In our established institutions, those of all parents, of all ranks, and destined for all the gradations of society, are brought up together, and receive the same impressions both with respect to matters of knowledge, and the conduct of life. Their characters will probably therefore be formed from the same views, the same associations, and the same expectations. These circumstances alone cannot be supposed to have an exclusive influence, yet perhaps more than we should readily believe. Were a difference of education, between the children of different classes, established upon judicious principles and with regard to proper points, we feel assured that good effects would result from it in the end. Education ought not merely to consist in the acquisition of a certain knowledge of letters, or of numbers, or of the art of writing ; but also in the formation of such a character, the cultivation of such feelings, the establishment of such principles of conduct, as will prepare the individual for that rank in life which he is probably destined to maintain. In this way it might probably be made more interesting, as well as more profitable. Emulation would be confined to equals, and the children of all stations be fitted to become useful members of society ; while at the same time a just regard would be maintained for the spirit of our republican institutions, and for the promotion of that laudable ambition, which encourages the efforts, and keeps the virtue, of the very humblest.

There seems to us scarcely any subject which so much deserves the attention of the legislator and the politician, as that

which we have just been considering. There is in the natural constitution of society, no necessity for any pauperism, except such as is the inevitable consequence of misfortune, sickness, or old age. All other is produced by a departure from this constitution, and indicates some defect either in the moral, or political character of the community. So far as the latter is in fault, it is certainly possible to amend it, and political regulations may also be so adapted as to have a powerful effect upon the former. It is melancholy to reflect, that so large a class of our fellow-beings, thus drag out their existence in dependence; to a certain degree, degraded below the level of their species, and this principally in consequence of their own follies or vices; and that the evil instead of decreasing, is advancing with regular and rapid strides, whilst comparatively little is done to check its progress. That those measures, to which we are prompted by the natural benevolence of our nature, are totally inadequate, that they in fact only add fuel to the flame, is, we presume, without dispute; that those of a different and more effectual nature ought to be adopted and carried into execution is, we hope, equally evident, and ought to meet with no opposition from those mistaken views of the nature of real benevolence, which continue to exist, only because they have never been opposed.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

From French Religious Magazines.

IN our last number, we communicated some extracts from two religious periodical publications, which have recently been commenced in Paris; the one a Protestant, the other, a Catholic work. The following paragraphs are further selections from the same.

IN the seventh number, of the *Chronique Religieuse*, there is a notice of the History of the Spanish Inquisition, by M. Llorente, just completed in four volumes. The reviewer speaks of it as a very valuable work. "Favourable circumstances," he says, "have brought to light the secret, and most secret records of the Holy Office—deplorable monuments of a tribunal, whose existence is a scandal to the gospel. Thanks to a trust-worthy and courageous writer, we possess at last a History of the Spanish Inquisition."

In the same number, there is a complaint respecting the representations made of the religious state of France, in a report delivered to the Missionary Society in London, September, 1813. The authors, it is observed, "say, that they searched four days without finding a bible in our bookstores." "Where," it is asked, "did they search? Without doubt in those bookstores where only medical or mathematical works are sold." In others, some of which are specified, it is said they might have found immediately perhaps a hundred bibles, and some hundred copies of the New Testament.

The following is taken from the eighteenth number.

"In our last number it was stated, that in Spain the custom had been suppressed of having a priest ready with the consecrated oil, in an apartment adjoining the avenue, when the bull-fights are carried on, in order to administer extreme unction to those combatants who should be mortally wounded. This statement was erroneous. Our latest accounts from Madrid attest that the custom still continues. Nothing more is wanted but to extend it to duellists; and to place by the side of two men who are attempting to murder each other, a priest with the consecrated oil, in order to administer it to the one who shall be wounded; who, without doubt, will be prepared by the action in which he has been engaged, to receive the sacrament in a very christian manner. Such customs are worthy of a country where the Holy Inquisition has been reestablished for the purpose of maintaining purity of morals and doctrine."

In the fifteenth number, there is some notice of the present state of Hayti. It is observed that in both divisions of the island, there is a zeal for establishing *schools of mutual instruction*, colleges, and Lyceums for instruction in the learned languages and higher branches of knowledge. "Several works which deserve to be mentioned with respect, have been published by blacks and men of colour."

"I am ignorant," says the writer, "what periodical works are published in the northern part of the island; but in the western, besides the *Bulletin of the laws*, there are *le Telegraphe* and *l'Abeille Haitienne*, (a political and literary journal, a miscellany of prose and verse) which would prove the aptitude and capacity of the children of Africa in literature and science, if these had not for a long time been made evident. The 21st

number of l'Abeille Haitienne contains a poem on the immortality of the soul against the Materialists and other unbelievers."*

The facts mentioned in the following paragraph show the liberal feelings with which the Protestants in France are regarded by the members of the royal family.

"M. Marron, President of the consistory of the reformed church in Paris, having had the honour of putting into the hands of the king, and of each of the members of the royal family, the peroration of his discourse on charity, recently delivered, has enjoyed the inexpressible satisfaction of announcing to the consistory, in the name of these august personages, the following benefactions for the poor of his church, viz. 1000 francs from her R. H. Madame, 800 francs from his R. H. Monsieur, 500 loaves of bread during each of the months of January, February, and March from his R. H. the Duke of Angouleme, and 500 francs from his R. H. the Duke of Berri. Our readers, touched by this act of benevolence, will perceive in it a proof of the interest, which our princes have wished to manifest for all the Protestant Christians of the kingdom."

The following notice is from the number of the Archives for April.

"Mr. John Henry van der Palm, pastor at Leyden, and professor of the Oriental languages and of Hebrew antiquities in the university in that city, having issued proposals during the last year for a new version of the bible into Dutch, in 3 vols. quarto, has had the satisfaction of obtaining in a short time 2200 subscribers for this honourable undertaking; a fact which proves equally the religious character of his countrymen, and the esteem and confidence with which he is regarded by them. These sentiments are justified by the numerous preceding works of this distinguished scholar, particularly his new Dutch translation of the Prophet Isaiah in 3 vols. 8vo.; and several volumes of sermons. At the epoch of the reformation, there appeared a Dutch version of the bible, very remarkable for the time when it was made, and which the Dutch appear disposed to retain in use as a respectable model. Mr. van der Palm announces that he shall preserve its language as much as possible. During the last quarter of a century, various undertakings similar to that of Mr. van der Palm, that is to say complete translations of the bible, have been executed in Holland. We shall mention only those of Van Nuys Klinkenberg, Van Vlooten, and Van Hamelsveld.

* We should be much indebted to any friend and correspondent, who would furnish us with any number of the above-mentioned works, directed to the Editors of the Christian Disciple, care of Messrs. Wells and Lilly, Boston.

Mission to Otaheite, &c.—A narrative of a mission to Otaheite and other islands in the South Seas, down to Sept. 1817, has recently been published in London. The work itself has not reached us, but we have been able to obtain some account of it, and a few extracts, which we think will be interesting to our readers.

The first exertions of the London Missionary Society in this place were exceedingly ill-judged, indiscreet, and unsuccessful. But it is now stated that the perseverance of the Missionaries under discouragements the most trying and disheartening, has at length issued in producing a very extensive renunciation of idolatry among the islanders of the Southern Ocean. The Missionaries had begun to print the Taheitan Spelling-book on the 30th of June, on which occasion the king was present, and worked off the first three sheets. This edition consisting of 2600 copies, has been completed, and between 7 and 800 had been distributed in Otaheite and Eimeo. Translations of different parts of the Holy Scriptures were going forward, and an edition of 1000 copies of St. Luke's Gospel was about to be published.

The number of natives in the Georgian islands only, who were able to read and spell has increased to between *four and five thousand*, and Pomare (the king) had issued orders, that in every district of the islands, a schoolhouse should be erected, separate from the places of worship, and that the best instructed of his people should teach others. Several schools had already been erected in Otaheite, where the elementary books and the catechism are taught, and since the establishment of the printing press, the natives of that island pass over in crowds to Afarcaitu, to obtain books from the Missionaries there. At this station a school had been erected, which was well attended; and of the natives who had been taught in the school at Pape-toai there were few who could not both read and spell well.

The attendance on the public worship at each of the missionary stations, continued on an average to be from 4 to 500.

The christian religion is now professedly received by the inhabitants of Otaheite, Eimeo, and six other islands, in all of which, the Lord's day is devoutly observed.

This change has not been adopted without deliberation. The Otaheitans, for twelve years, had opportunity of closely observing the nature of practical christianity, as exemplified by the missionaries; and during most of that time, its doctrines had been explained, and urged upon their attention, in every district of the island. In declaring themselves christians, therefore, they well know what they profess to believe, and what kind of conduct they bind themselves to observe. That this

was very far from being the state of the barbarous nations of Europe, when first converted to Christianity, is obvious; neither do the sacred scriptures imply, that equal information had previously been acquired by the earliest converts of the Gospel.

Although Pomare, the first in rank, professed himself a christian before any person among his remaining subjects did so, he appears to have been too well informed of the principles and nature of christianity, to think of *enforcing* it on others. He patiently travelled round the only island, then subject to him, argued with the higher and lower ranks against their inveterate superstitions (to which none could be more notoriously addicted than he had long been,) prevailed with some, was opposed by others, but never appears to have aimed at any other influence than that of reason.

The London Missionary Society appear to be taking the most effectual measures for rendering this wonderful revolution in the religious opinions of these islanders permanent, by introducing among them a system of regular labour, as the best safeguard of their religious and moral habits. They have sent out a person at the recommendation of Mr. Marsden, for the express purpose of directing the attention of the natives to the sugar-cane, the coffee, and the cotton trees, and other indigenous plants.

[Abridged from the *Eclectic Review*.]

Massachusetts Bible Society.—The anniversary of this society was held on Thursday, June 2d. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Jonathan Homer of Newton, and the following report was presented by the executive committee.

“THE Executive Committee of the Massachusetts Bible Society respectfully report, that they have distributed through the last year, Bibles and Testaments as follows.

Large Bibles, 183, Small do. 1846, Testaments, 1578, whole number, 3607.

It is gratifying to your Committee to state, that an important object, early proposed and steadily pursued by this society, is now in a great degree accomplished, viz. the distribution of bibles in a fair type and on good paper. Much service has been rendered to the cause in this particular by the American bible society. The poor now receive copies of the Scriptures, which they can easily read, and which claim, by their appearance as well as by their contents, a respectful treatment.

The demand for bibles has been increased by the establishment of numerous charity schools. Your committee are also

bound to express their fear, that the liberality of this institution sometimes, if not frequently, produces applications from those, who are able to purchase the scriptures for themselves, and from some, who propose other advantages than spiritual, by obtaining your bounty. Among the inestimable benefits of Bible Societies, abuses have sprung up, not easily corrected. Your committee are disposed to think, that were the gratuitous distribution of the Bible to be considerably discontinued in our old settlements, and were the society to direct its efforts more to the procuring of cheap and good editions, and to the vending of them at the prime cost, it would do more good at home, whilst its bounty would flow more widely to the destitute parts of this and other countries. The truest method of perpetuating charitable institutions, which depend on voluntary subscriptions, is to free them from corruptions and perversions. Our very zeal in spreading the bible may sometimes defeat itself by making the benefit too cheap and common. In giving this book, we wish for some pledge that it will be valued, retained and used, and perhaps the best pledge is a willingness to make some exertions and sacrifices for obtaining it.

Your committee have no facts to report, which are not probably known to the society in general. The good cause is every where making progress. New friends and patrons of Bible Societies are springing up in every quarter of the globe. History affords no example of an equally extensive cooperation in a benevolent and pious work. It seems to us a corroboration of the divine original of the Bible, that it is binding together good men of so many nations, that it is calling forth an unheard of charity, that it is a central point to the benevolence of the world. Of one fact we have the fullest evidence, that no institutions have done so much as Bible societies to break down the partition walls between christians, to bring near to one another the long divided disciples of Jesus, and to teach them to recognize in each other the features of brethren.

Of the operations of the parent institution in Great Britain we need not speak. We must cease to praise, because the language of praise is exhausted. The extension of the Bible Society in Russia under the patronage of the munificent Alexander, when joined with other expressions of the christian dispositions of that sovereign, is one of the most encouraging events in this age of hope and promise. We have heard with peculiar pleasure of the formation of a Bible Society in France, which we hail as the bursting forth of a living fountain in a parched land, from which many are to drink and be revived. We have received letters from Paris acknowledging gratefully the reception of the sum forwarded by this society to assist in the dis-

tribution of the scriptures in France, and we are more persuaded than ever, that a wiser appropriation could not have been made.

We are thus encouraged to proceed in the good work, which for many years we have assisted in advancing. It is true that amidst the numerous and vast contributions of christians to this design, our charity attracts little notice, just as, on the map of the earth, scanty streams find no place among mighty rivers and oceans. But the stream which winds in silence is a provision of that same Almighty Goodness which pours forth the seas and floods ; its course is marked with approbation by the same All-seeing Eye ; it is essential to the variety and beauty of the beneficent system of God. Let us not discontinue our efforts, because we cannot do more ; but be grateful, if in any degree we can communicate the uncorrupted records of Christianity to those, who, equally with ourselves, need its light and consolations.

By the Executive committee,

WILLIAM E. CHANNING, *Chairman.*

Officers of the Massachusetts Bible Society, elected June, 1818.

His Honour WILLIAM PHILLIPS, *President.*

Rev. JOHN T. KIRKLAND, D. D. *Vice-President.*

Rev. FRANCIS PARKMAN, *Corresponding Secretary.*

Rev. JOHN PIERCE, *Recording Secretary.*

Mr. JOHN TAPPAN, *Treasurer.*

Mr. JOHN GREW, *Assistant Treasurer.*

Trustees.

Rev. James Freeman, D. D.

Rev. Eliphalet Porter, D. D.

Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D.

Rev. Thomas Baldwin, D. D.

Rev. Charles Lowell.

Rev. Joshua Huntington.

Josiah Salisbury, Esq.

Joseph Hurd, Esq.

Samuel Parkman, Esq.

Joseph May, Esq.

Henry Hill, Esq.

Hon. Isaac Parker.

Hon. Peter C. Brooks.

Dea. John Simpkins.

Hon. Thomas Dawes.

Benjamin West, Esq.

Samuel H. Walley, Esq.

N. P. Russell, Esq.

Executive Committee.

Rev. William E. Channing. Edward Tuckerman, jun. Esq.

Rev. Henry Ware, jun.

Mendicity Society in London.—The following abstract of the late Report of this Society, may be found interesting in connexion with the second review in this number.

The Report mentions that the Society had been instituted in consequence of the great distress observable in the streets, at the commencement of 1818, in order to remove the shocking objects which presented themselves, by relief, and where imposture should be detected, by punishment. In March, the society opened an office, from which they issued printed tickets to be distributed to street beggars. The tickets referred them to the society's house, where they were immediately supplied with food, and a statement of each case was registered, the truth of which was afterward ascertained by personal investigation and inquiry. It appeared to the Board that the society had already done much good. Since the opening of the office on March 25th, 2676 cases have been referred to the society, during the investigation of which the applicants were supplied with food, as well as 677 children belonging to them, and in many cases with temporary lodging. The applicants were disposed of in different ways. A great number were permanently relieved; 564 impostors and desperate vagrants were detected and ordered to be prosecuted. Multitudes were sent to their parishes and provided with situations. Of those who applied, 1568 complained that they had been reduced on account of want of employment. The great difficulty in the way of entire success appears to be the conduct of the parishes, who oftentimes turn loose again, those, who are sent home to them; and the want of sufficient discretionary power in the magistrates.

Springfield, May 27, 1819.

On Thursday last, in presence of a large number of people, was laid the corner-stone of the Church erecting for the Second Congregational Society in the First Parish in this town, in which was deposited a plate, bearing the following inscription: "MAY 20, A. D. MDCCCXIX. THIS CORNER-STONE WAS LAID, It being the foundation of a House to be erected the same year (Mr. SIMON SANBORN, being the Architect,) at the expense of JONATHAN DWIGHT, Esq. of this town, and by him given to "The Second Congregational Society in the First Parish in Springfield," in humble hope and expectation that it may long continue a place consecrated to the public worship of the true GOD: and that the Society will, from time to time, make choice of such pious and prudent men for their ministers as will not perplex their people with unprofitable speculations of men, but preach and exemplify the

plain practical doctrines and precepts, contained in the GOSPEL OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."

On this interesting occasion, a very appropriate and excellent prayer was made by the Rev. Mr. CHASE preacher at the United States Chapel in this town.

ORDINATIONS.

On the fifth day of May last, the Rev. Jared Sparks was ordained pastor of the First Independent Church in Baltimore. This church having been gathered for the purpose of maintaining Unitarian and Anti-calvinistic worship, the ordaining council was necessarily composed of churches from this part of the country. It consisted of representations from the following churches. In Boston, Federal Street, Rev. Mr. Channing; Brattle Square, Rev. Mr. Palfrey. Roxbury, Rev. Dr. Porter. Harvard University, Rev. Dr. Ware. Lancaster, Rev. Dr. Thayer. Portland, (Maine) Rev. Mr. Nichols. Portsmouth, (N. H.) Rev. Mr. Parker. Providence, (R. I.) Rev. Mr. Edes. The written services of the day have been published. And to those of our readers who have not yet seen it, we earnestly recommend the Sermon of Mr. Channing, as a clear, forcible, and eloquent statement of some of the most important truths of our religion.

On the 23d day of June, the Rev. Convers Francis was ordained minister of the Church and Society in Watertown. Introductory prayer by Rev. Mr. Lowell of Boston. Sermon by Rev. Dr. Osgood of Medford, from 1 Tim. 1. xv. *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*—Ordaining prayer by Rev. Pres. Kirkland. Charge, by Rev. Dr. Ripley of Concord. Right hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Palfrey of Boston. Concluding prayer, by Rev. Mr. Ripley of Waltham.

OBITUARY.

Died, in Salem, in May last, Col. Benjamin Pickman, senior, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

Col. Pickman was born in Salem, in 1741, and was graduated at Cambridge University, 1759. This gentleman enjoyed through life a good portion of the "otium cum dignitate," so much desired and so little known. Descended from wealthy parents, educated in the best style of his time, possessing a constitution of soundness and vigour, a person of elegance and dignity, a mind of strength and elevation, a disposition mild and affectionate, and placing "the bliss in ease," and honour in virtue, he moved on, enjoying and doing good as long as life had a charm, and, when nature was exhausted, by the regular decay of age, he sunk into the grave without any of the terrific agonies of dissolution, and fell as it were into a refreshing sleep. He pursued learning, not as a necessary requisite to a profession, not as a passion, nor merely as an ornament of life, but for the pleasure it ensures, for the grace it lends to manners, for the purity it gives to the affections, for the light it adds to moral philosophy, and the

aid it affords to religion. He was well acquainted with the common classics, with ancient and modern history, with British annals, and with many rare and curious works in the literature of every age. It might be said of him, however, that he read much, rather than many things, and oftener resorted to the old, than searched for the new : but every subject was selected with great taste and judgment. He had no passion for the parade of company, but loved society and sought it. His house was the abode of hospitality, and at his table were constantly found men of intelligence of all ages, from the young, whose visions of life were fresh, and whose hopes were full of promise and transport, to those who had seen and felt enough of its vicissitudes and delusions, to place but little reliance on its realities and enjoyments. There they mingled feeling and opinions, and talked of the lights and shades of existence in freedom and harmony. He always, at such times, directed the conversation without engrossing it, and gave it a tone without seeming to have any particular control over it. He was truly the friend of peace, and evinced his principles by the practice of his life. He was a philanthropist, and listened with delight to the most minute details of the happiness, or fame of his friends ; but always discovered uneasiness at an amusing story told at the expense of any one, and turned with resentment from a tale of slander. He was sincerely attached to all our valuable institutions, but particularly to Harvard University ; and no man in the community knew so much of the welfare and history of the Alumni of his ALMA MATER, as Col. Pickman. He obtained this information by frequent inquiry, and retained it by an extraordinary memory ; but he had nothing about him of that meddling spirit which leads men to be over inquisitive for no good purpose. He inquired after their welfare from good wishes, and obtained their history as a matter of information, and for the general good.

He was a lover and patron of the clerical character, believing that much of the happiness of society depends on a wise and virtuous clergy ; but his doctrines were well established, and his views of God and his providence so full of benevolence and charity to man, that he escaped, whenever he could, from the unceasing polemic, and always evaded the incorrigible bigot. He was pious without sanctimony, liberal without ostentation, pleasant without exuberance of spirits, dignified without severity of manners, charitable to error, without countenancing what was wrong, and mild to opposition, but steadfast in the right. He saw and felt the failings of humanity, without believing in the total depravity of man. He smiled at pedantry, pitied ignorance, forgave the unmannerly, and pursued with philosophical and christian complacency, " the even tenor of his way." Blessed with an uncommon share of health, and domestic enjoyment and prosperity, he retained his faculties and cheerfulness unto a good old age ; and truly it may be said, few men ever enjoyed more or suffered less in this world ; and no one ever lived more respected, by those who knew him, for his private virtues, or died, leaving sweeter recollections. His wintry sun shone as bright, if not so intensely, as in the summer of life, and went down without a cloud.

LITERARY NOTICE.

Messrs. Wells & Lilly propose to publish by subscription, *THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE*, or a description of all the beasts, birds and fishes, insects and reptiles, trees and plants, metals, precious stones, &c. mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, collected from the best authorities and alphabetically arranged. By Thaddeus Mason Harris, D. D. A. A. S. and

S. H. S. minister of the first parish in Dorchester. A new edition, revised, improved, and enlarged. "He spake of Trees, from the Cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the Hyssop that springeth out of the wall. He spake also of Beasts, and of Fowls, and of creeping things, and of Fishes." 1 Kings, iv. 33.

A small volume with this title was published in 1793, and has been long out of print. Its merit and its estimation have been indicated by its rapid sale, and by the commendations of some of the most learned biblical critics and eminent divines in this country and in Europe. The work has been since wholly transcribed and greatly enlarged; and the author's studies for more than twenty-five years have so contributed to its improvement, that he feels a confidence in now offering it to the public as the most perfect of the kind in any language; and is assured that it will be found to convey much useful information upon the subjects of which it treats, satisfactorily to explain the reasons for the distinction between clean and unclean animals in the Mosaic ritual, and to discover the propriety and beauty of the frequent allusion to natural objects in the sacred writings, in instances which have been wholly unperceived, or but indistinctly discerned.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A Dissertation on the Book of Revelation, dedicated to the author's friends in America. By James Gray, of the county of Longford, Ireland. Newburgh, 1818.

A Series of Lectures on the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence—delivered in the Universalist Church, Lombard Street, Philadelphia. By Abner Kneeland.

Second Annual Report of the American Society for colonizing the free people of colour of the United States. Washington, 1819.

Report of the Committee of Enquiry of the South Church in Weymouth, in which are stated their *serious and solemn reasons* for declining to request the assistance of the North Church, in the ordination of their Junior pastor, Rev. W. Tyler. Feb. 24th, 1819.

Sermons, preached in the Tron Church, Glasgow. By Thomas Chalmers, D. D. New York, reprinted. Kirk and Mercein.

Poems, by Jacob Porter. Hartford.

Hymns, for the nativity of our Saviour Jesus Christ. In four parts. By G. Carseer. Boston.

A Sermon, delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Jared Sparks to the pastoral care of the first Independent Church in Baltimore, May 5, 1819. By William E. Channing, of Boston. 2d Edition. Baltimore and Boston.

Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. John Pierpont. By Henry Ware, D. D. Professor of divinity, Cambridge.

An humble attempt to ascertain the Scriptural Doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In three discourses. To which is added "The Awakener." By Jacob Norton, A. M., minister in Weymouth. Boston. 1819.

A Sermon, delivered at Newburyport, at the interment of Rev. Samuel Spring, D. D. by Rev. Leonard Woods, Professor of Theology, Andover.

The Annual General Election Sermon. By Rev. Peter Eaton, of Boxford.

Sermon before the Convention of Congregational Ministers. By Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D. Cambridge.

Sermon at the Anniversary of the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company. By Rev. Thomas Gray of Roxbury.

Eulogy delivered at the request of St. John's Lodge, on the character of Shubael Bell, Esq. By Samuel L. Knapp. Boston.

The Friend of Peace, No. 16.

Report of the Massachusetts Bible Society. June, 1819.

Report of the Middlesex Auxiliary Bible Society. June, 1819.

Reasons offered by Samuel Eddy, Esq. for his Opinions, to the first Baptist Church in Providence from which he was compelled to withdraw for heterodoxy. THIRD EDITION. Providence.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Review of "*The Trial—Calvin and Hopkins versus the Bible and Common Sense*," has been received by the editors. They cheerfully express their approbation of the spirit and design of the writer of the review, but they apprehend, that the insertion of the article would on the whole be inexpedient. Whilst they wish to discourage a light and uncharitable method of discussing religious subjects, they are unwilling to give a pledge, as the author seems to desire, that they will openly disavow every work written in support of their sentiments, in a style which they disapprove. Should they take upon themselves this unpleasant office, it is obvious, that their silence in regard to some works, which they may think unworthy notice, would be construed into a testimony in their favour. It should be remembered too, that controversial writings, not excepting the most able, have too often a mixture of human imperfection and passion, and that reviewers cannot reasonably be expected to watch over this class of publications for the purpose of branding what is unchristian either in friends or foes.

We fear that we shall be unable to make use of the paper communicated by W. If we should think it best to take so extended a view of the subject at all, we should hardly be ready to do it now. We should wish too, in a publication like this, to adopt a little different mode of treatment, and to avoid some of the reasoning which appears to us irrelevant and inconclusive.

We thank "A SUBSCRIBER" for the work he has sent us, and will take it under consideration. But we cannot admit his remarks upon an article in our last number,—not only because we are averse to entering into a controversy on the subject, but because it would be obviously improper to commence the endless task of inserting replies which may be made from every quarter to the sentiments we advance and defend.

The paper under the signature of "TRUTH," was not received in season for insertion in the present number. We have no doubt of the correctness of its positions, and it remains under consideration.

We have received an interesting account of Doddridge's Theological School. It shall appear in the next number.

ERRATA.

In No. 1. First Edition, p. 39. line 11 for *cannot*, read *can*.

67. 37 for *The*, read *They*.

Both Editions, 8. 31. for *purifying*, read *justifying*.

22 last line but one, for *he* read *we*.

No. 2 p. 136 36 for *have* read *leave*.

33 for *leave* read *have*.

109. 12 for *Buefwechsel*, read *Briefwechsel*.

117. line 21 for *by* read *to*.

In a part of the impression of the present No., p. 170. line 8, for *will* be read *is*.

THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 72.

NEW SERIES—No. 4.

For July and August, 1819.

ON THE HISTORY AND CHARACTER OF DODDRIDGE'S SEMINARY.

To the Editor of the Christian Disciple.

SIR,

PERHAPS no name can be mentioned among Christian divines, at once so familiar and so dear to the friends of religion without distinction, as that of Doddridge. Most of us, therefore, would be very unwilling "to give up to party" one who belongs to the great cause of piety and charity throughout Christendom; and it is sufficiently well known, that justice to his character would forbid such a sacrifice, not less than regard to the interests of catholicism. To this sort of usurpation however, the most popular names are very naturally the most liable; and it is melancholy to think that he, whose candid and enlarged mind has secured to him the united love and respect of his fellow-christians, is the more eagerly claimed on this very account, by the zealots of a sect; especially, if any point of agreement in doctrine can be found between them. He is, when his own voice can be no longer heard, made an associate in the spirit and the acts of an exclusive party. We shall seek in vain, for a man whose name has been more continually thus abused, than that of the pious and liberal Doddridge. It is not easy without a smile to meet his name, regularly on the cover of our religious journals in the company of some, from whom (it may be said without hazard, I think) had he been a living cotemporary, he would have kept more widely removed; and he would, perhaps, on the same supposition, have had as little fellowship with those whose

names might be subscribed to many of the pages within, notwithstanding this pretended sanction of his own.

Of this sectarian appropriation of the name of Doddridge, I have lately met with an instance in a discourse delivered, Oct. 1818, by the Rev. Dr. Porter, "at the Dedication of a new edifice for the use of the Seminary in Andover;" and I believe you will agree with me, that the very incorrect impression it is calculated to give, ought not to pass unexposed. The passage to which I refer, is found in a most remarkable paragraph, full of fearful forebodings, (in which the author is probably aware that he is not at all singular,) as to the future character of the institution with which he is connected. Neither "the strength of our own powers," nor "the elevated motives of our founders," nor "the safeguards of our constitution," he observes, afford any ground of reliance on its undeviating adherence to the purity of the faith. "Where are *other* seminaries," he adds, "which wisdom encompassed with its precautions, and piety consecrated to Christ and the church? Have we forgotten—can we forget the awful lesson furnished to mankind by the school of Doddridge?"

The language of Dr. Porter would lead to the inference, that the character of the school of Doddridge was in the lapse of time revolutionized, and the chair of this pious divine occupied at last by unworthy successors. His hearers and readers may not in general be very minutely acquainted with the history of this seminary; and perhaps, therefore, would receive this statement without suspicion or doubt. To attribute as little acquaintance with it to Dr. Porter, would probably be unjust, certainly uncomplimentary; and to his inconsideration therefore, I must ascribe a reference, which is not merely nothing to his purpose, but, what is more, will be easily shown to have been a most unfortunate example.

It is now more than a century since Wm. Coward, Esq. an eminent merchant of London, bequeathed his large property to pious purposes. In his views of Christianity, he was a decided Calvinist; but it does not appear that his mind was so bigoted to a system as to restrict his wealth to its exclusive support. Certain it is, that the terms of his will left his trustees at full liberty to devote this property to the cause of education among the youth of Protestant dissenters indiscriminately. These trustees consisted of three dissenting ministers and one layman. For many years two respectable and flourishing institutions, having the above object, were supported by this fund; one, in the vicinity of London, successively under the care of Dr. Jennings, Dr. Savage, Dr. Kippis, and Dr. Rees. This list, one would think, was a sufficient an-

swer to the supposition that this fund was at any period made subservient to the promotion of a peculiar system. The other seminary was at first established at Northampton, under the care of Dr. Doddridge. It was afterwards removed to Daventry, under Dr. Caleb Ashworth, and in 1785, the trustees, deeming the fund inadequate to the support of two institutions, united the first mentioned with that at Daventry, under the Rev. Thomas Belsham. They who are apt to be deceived by names, will startle probably at Mr. Belsham's, and imagine Dr. Porter's language to have been abundantly justified. Let it be understood, then, that this now well known divine was, at the time of his appointment, of that class of believers commonly called evangelical dissenters; and the circumstances of his resignation are both so interesting, and so accordant with my purpose in these remarks, that the relation of them, I trust, will not be to trespass on the patience of your readers.

During the period of Mr. Belsham's connexion with this academy, the Unitarian controversy, occasioned by the writings of Lindsey and Priestley, was vehemently agitated in England. To this controversy, the Principal deemed it his duty to direct the attention of his pupils. For their benefit and his own, he prepared, after the manner of Dr. Clarke, a classification of all the texts referring to this great question, and supposed to favour either of the prevailing modes of faith, certainly omitting none, to which the advocates of the highest notions of our Saviour's nature are fond of appealing. He had the most undoubting confidence, that the controversy would soon be decided by the complete discomfiture of the new heresiarchs. But the result was far other than his expectations; for the young minds of his pupils, yet unfettered to a system, were more open to conviction, and many of them at length adopted those opinions they were expected to subvert, much to the grief of their friends, and not least to that of their instructor. His own habits of thinking were more firmly rivetted; and though, from the first of the inquiry, he was surprised to find so few unequivocal proofs of his favourite opinions, yet such was the ascendancy which the associations of education had obtained over his mind, that he does not believe it would have been in the power of argument to have subdued it, had not the nature of his office, which required him to repeat his lectures to successive classes, compelled his attention again and again to the subject. His original prepossessions became thus almost imperceptibly overruled, and he was brought over to a faith, against which his present interest as well as previous opinions alike revolted. Such, however, is the feeling with which the mind watches its vacillations in an inquiry of this high moment, when it is most anx-

ious to form a correct decision, when almost every thing rests on that decision, and when it is most unwilling to suspect as error what it has long venerated as truth, that he could at last be convinced of the entire revolution of his views and sentiments, only by the distressing embarrassment occasioned him by the repetition in public of a sermon composed a few years previously, in which the doctrines he had just been examining were assumed as truths. Then it was that he felt it incumbent to resign his charge into the hands by which it had been conferred. To this measure, the peculiar conscientiousness of his own feelings impelled him; for the constitution of the seminary did not necessarily require his separation from it. But however compatible his present views were with the constitution, they were not probably with those of the then governors of the academy; and it was sufficient to determine a mind so open and honest, that the New Testament did not now present to him the same aspect, as when appointed to his office.—In giving this account of Mr. Belsham's connexion with this institution, and the particulars of his removal, I have, as far as brevity would admit, used the language of his own recital. In the year 1789, the academy was again removed to Northampton, and subsequently to Wymondely.

But enough of the history of this institution; especially as what remains to be said, has the far more important reference to its character. Such a revolution as Dr. Porter intimates, would not have rewarded the slightest exertions it might have required in the friends of heresy, as he accounts them, to effect it. We assure him, that in no state of things could the cause of these men be more kindly fostered, than it was while this seminary remained under the care of its first evangelical instructor; and that, during his life and labours, it was the nursery of ministers to the societies of liberal dissenters throughout the kingdom. Now, if to any this historical fact appear enigmatical, our solution is ready at hand. The course of education pursued by this excellent man was, in deed and in truth, upon those catholic principles of unlimited inquiry and private judgment, with the *profession* and *acknowledgment* of which, happily, it is found neither safe nor wise altogether to dispense in "other seminaries;" and the consequence was, that a large proportion of the students came to conclusions very different from those of their master. Fortunately there is now before me a catalogue of Doddridge's pupils during the twenty-two years that the academy was under his care (from 1729 to 1751;) in which are to be found many names whose celebrity has reached our own country. I am not a little desirous that your readers should know what names they are; and, to take certain-

ly the most distinguished and familiar, they are the Rev. Job Orton, Rev. Hugh Farmer, Dr. John Aikin, Rev. Samuel Merriale, the well-known author of *Daily Devotions*, Dr. Andrew Kippis, and the pious and eloquent Rev. Newcome Capps. I do not mean to apply to the first of these the remark just made in regard to the opinions of Doddridge's students. Orton's were probably very similar to those of his master, but he resembled him quite as much in his affectionate and candid temper.* He was a liberal Christian, in the best sense of that term at least. As to the others whom I have named, there will be no dispute where they are to be classed; and I think, that a fairer comment was never given upon the history of an institution, at once orthodox in doctrine and catholic in spirit, than this. Never shall we meet with a more unequivocal test of the natural result of a mode of education, which does indeed allow the "utmost latitude of inquiry." In truth, if there ever was an instructor whose whole character at once silenced doubts and objections as to the justice of such a conclusion, Doddridge surely was the man. Our opponents we have little doubt would indignantly reject the supposition, (and with good cause, who will deny?) that the "presence of God could be ever withdrawn" from the scenes which he honoured, or that "the spirit of piety could there decline." They will not admit, no, not for a moment, that he could ever suffer the "pure word of God to be adulterated by adventurous and unhallowed speculation." He was not the man, we are confident, to encourage that spirit of half-learned "pedantry, which produces rash and frivolous criticism on the Scriptures, which always delights in paradox, always believes where others doubt, and doubts where others believe."

In closing these remarks it would be ungrateful not to embrace the opportunity thus presented, of rendering Dr. Porter our thanks for pressing this subject upon our notice. It is impossible not to wish that those who are so eager to claim the name

*Of this, I cannot refrain from giving a specimen alike honourable to the writer, and to that most exemplary christian divine to whom it refers. It is to be found in a letter of Orton to the Rev. S. Palmer of Hackney. "Were I to publish an account of silenced and ejected ministers, I should be strongly tempted to insert Mr. Lindsey in the list, which he mentions in his Apology with so much veneration. He certainly deserves as much respect and honour as any one of them, for the part he has acted. Perhaps few of them exceeded him in learning and piety. I venerate him as I would any of your confessors. As to his particular sentiments, they are nothing to me. An honest pious man, who makes such a sacrifice to truth and conscience as he has done, is a glorious character, and deserves the respect, esteem, and veneration of every true Christian."

of Doddridge, were better acquainted with his real character, and evinced more practically their reverence for its authority. Let them not be too ready to forget the friendly intercourse in which he lived with the amiable and pious Lardner, of his great affection and esteem for whom, his letters contain a striking testimony. Let pastors and congregations alike remember, that when some narrow minds in his society would have excluded from the rights of Christian communion, an Arian believer, it was he who interposed a firm and steady resistance to the attempt, declaring himself ready to sacrifice his place and even his life, rather than suffer such a stigma to be cast upon one whose Christian character none could assail. Let it be impressed on his successors in the schools of the prophets, that no opinions which his pupils found reason to adopt, however remote from his own, produced any diminution of his assistance and kind regard, as his biographer Dr. Kippis has gratefully testified. If the wish were not altogether chimerical, we could desire to see all our schools of sacred instruction, committed to the care of men, if indeed so many could be found, altogether such as Doddridge in temper, character, and, we are willing to add, even opinions. That the interests of piety and charity would triumphantly flourish under such protection, will be readily conceded by all. And after the statement which has now been made, your readers will think it requires no spirit of prophecy, to discern the results which would follow in regard to those also of knowledge and truth.

ON FARMER'S HYPOTHESIS RESPECTING OUR LORD'S TEMPTATION.

Mr. Editor,

The following remarks were thrown together upon being requested by a friend to lend him Dr. Farmer's Essay on the Temptation. They are submitted to you with the hope of your approval, by Yours, &c.

PHILALETHES.

My Dear Friend,

THOUGH Dr. Farmer's dissertation on our Saviour's Temptation is ingenious, and discovers a sincere desire to attain and support the truth, yet as it does not appear to me to proceed upon just principles, I will suggest some thoughts which occurred to me in the perusal of it, and afterwards mention an exposition of the account of the Temptation, which seems to my judgment less exceptionable.

I have nothing to object to his first and second sections, in which he remarks on the common modes of explanation; he has indeed very well refuted them; but in his third section, he attempts to shew that by the words, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness," Matt. iv, 1. the evangelist means to intimate that the events subsequently described took place *in vision*. This does not seem a very natural mode of interpretation; and by comparing this passage with others in which the same phrase occurs, we may find, I think, a more probable signification; for instance, Isaiah xlviii. 16. "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me;" Luke, iv. 18. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me;" i. e. I am under a divine influence, I am sent by God. In like manner, I cannot but think it was the intention of the evangelist to signify merely that our Saviour was led into the wilderness by a divine impulse. That the Jews did not use the phrase "in the spirit," to signify in vision, seems to be proved by Ezekiel xi. 24. "Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in vision by the spirit of God into Chaldaea, to them of the captivity." *In vision* is here added to *the spirit*, and *by the spirit of God*. These phrases therefore alone do not signify in vision.*

Dr. Farmer adds, that it was a vision presented by God; and, as the evangelists declare, and the whole narration plainly indicates, that there was an actual and real temptation, he would stand liable to the charge of saying that the Almighty tempted his beloved Son; but to escape from this, he urges that it was an instructive and symbolical vision. Sec. 4. This is an idea which, to say the least, the evangelists do not suggest, and it seems to me to be in opposition to their meaning. They all say that it was a scene, not of instruction or of prophetic communication, but of temptation, and nothing else. How does it appear that instruction of any sort was conveyed to Jesus? He was left to himself, he answered from his own mind the suggestions and instigations of the evil one. Compare this scene with the vision of Peter, Acts x. 9—16, the object of which was to convey a moral lesson. We see the use of this from the error into which Peter fell, and which was immediately corrected by the voice from heaven. But Jesus fell into no error, and, as far as appears, received no instruction. "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Another objection to Dr. Farmer's theory, is the agency by which he supposes the instruction to be conveyed. He does not, to be sure, maintain the actual presence of Satan, but he

* See Cappe's Critical Remarks, Vol. 2. p. 58.

conjectures that our Saviour saw him in vision ; that is, he supposes Christ to have seen an image of what I conceive never existed. I do not intend to give elaborately the arguments against the existence and agency of the Devil, but I will just hint at some of the reasons which induce me to regard the doctrine as false. First, the unreasonableness and apparent absurdity of supposing that there is a being able to cope with, and even to thwart Omnipotence itself. This, I grant, would weigh but little against the express declarations of Scripture, but I think it may be easily shewn that the idea has originated from an abuse of the language of the bible. Satan, in the Hebrew, means nothing more than an adversary, or opponent, and so it is frequently translated. Thus Numbers xxii. 22. "The angel of the Lord stood in the way for *an adversary* to Balaam." *Satan* in the original. Thus it is rendered likewise in 1 Kings xi. 14. 23. 25. Compare also 1 Chron. xxi. i. with 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. In one of these places the anger of *the Lord*, and in the other, the instigation of *Satan*, is referred to as the cause of the same effect. In the New Testament, Satan is said to have entered into Judas, John xiii. 27 ; and Peter says to Ananias, "Why hath Satan entered into thine heart," Acts v. 3. What can be the meaning of these passages, unless we suppose Satan to mean evil intentions, or bad passions ?

Great stress is laid upon the unclean spirits or devils, so often mentioned in the gospels. By these I think are meant diseases of various kinds, which were supposed by the Jews of that age, to be owing to possession by devils. A spirit of uncleanness, or an unclean spirit, was used by them in the same manner as a spirit of infirmity.* Luke xiii. 11. 12.

This doctrine, which has arisen from a misconception of the language, seems to me to be in direct opposition to the spirit of the holy Scriptures. Nothing can be more explicitly contradicted than is this doctrine, which savours so strongly of Magianism, by Isaiah xlv. 7. "I form the light, and create darkness, I make peace, and create evil, I the Lord do all these things;" and by Amos iii. 6. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath done it? St. James says, i. 13. 14. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God ; for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man ; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust." A strong and almost necessary inference from this passage is, that our own corrupt hearts, our own vicious inclinations, are the *only* tempters to whose influence we are exposed, the *only adversaries* to God and holiness to whose power we

* See Lardner's Discourses on the Dæmoniacs mentioned in the N. T.

are subjected. From these passages, we may infer that the apostles and evangelists merely adopted the popular phraseology of their times, without intending to imply any assent, or give any confirmation to the doctrine, which, in its literal meaning, this language supposes.

But whether the personal existence of the Devil be believed or not, the theory which supposes his agency in this transaction, either real or visionary, must still be regarded as equally faulty. For how is it possible to believe that such a being as Satan could offer temptation to our Lord? Who can suppose that even the weakest and most worthless of men could listen, with any other feelings than those of horror and aversion, to proposals regarded as proceeding immediately from Satan, whether really appearing in a bodily shape, or whether only imagined thus to appear. It is necessary, therefore, either to give up the idea of the personal appearance of Satan, whether in reality or in vision, or to contradict the assertion of the sacred historians, who declare that this transaction was properly a temptation. Dr. Farmer seems somewhat perplexed between these alternatives, and unsuccessfully attempts to shew that the objection, the weight of which he allows with respect to the common mode of interpretation, does not apply to his. He, at one moment, regards this scene as an actual temptation, and at another, as designed to convey prophetic and moral instruction. This produces a confusion and want of simplicity, which is another important objection to his system.

The reasons, then, which oblige me to regard his theory as erroneous, are, 1. that there is nothing in the evangelists to justify his supposition that the scene took place in vision; on the contrary, every thing indicates that it was, in some way or other, a real transaction; 2. that there is nothing which looks like a design to convey instruction, whether prophetic or moral; that none was either needed or given; 3. that neither reason nor scripture authorizes the belief of the existence of any evil principle like our idea of Satan, and it is therefore unreasonable to suppose that God would produce a visionary representation of such a being; 4. that he could possess no power of tempting our Lord, either in his own person, or in a visionary representation; 5. that there is a great want of simplicity and perspicuity in Dr. Farmer's manner of explaining the narrative.

I will now propose what seems to me a preferable mode of exposition. I suppose that Jesus, immediately after his baptism, being full of the holy spirit, was led by a divine influence to the wilderness. It is natural and easy to conjecture that he spent the forty days in prayer, meditation, and direct com-

munication with the Deity ; that it was a scene of preparation for his ministry. He had just received his miraculous powers, and his commission to preach the glad tidings of salvation. He was in an entirely new and untried situation. What more natural than that he should retire to the solitude of a desert, to meditate on the trials, temptations, and sufferings that he knew must await him, and to pray for strength to do the will of his heavenly Father? Emaciated by fasting, enfeebled in body, and worn down by long exertion of mind, some doubts or hesitation might have occurred to him with respect to the proper use of the miraculous powers with which he had just been endued. "Why should I not, he might have said, exert my powers for my own benefit. Why should I not at least supply the present necessities of my body, and command these stones to be made bread? If I am indeed the Son of God, if I have not been deceived by my own imagination, it will surely be done at my command. But no, the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give even his life a ransom for many. My powers have been given me as proofs of the divinity of my mission, and not to relieve my own necessities, or for my own benefit. In these respects I must trust like others to the providence of God, who will supply my wants, and preserve my life, by such means as may seem to Him most fit."

Again, Jesus compared his present, solitary, deserted, and enfeebled state, with the splendour and magnificence which the Jews expected in their Messiah. "Are they not right? Would the king of God's peculiar people be left in this neglected, and seemingly wretched condition? How grand and how striking a proof would it be, that I had come to be their king and deliverer, were I to cast myself down from a pinnacle of the temple, and astonish and dazzle the gazing multitude with the attendance of legions of angels! But it cannot be. The Messiah, the Saviour of the world, is not to appear with the splendour of royalty; he is not to receive honour in this world. He is to be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, he must be oppressed and afflicted, and at last cut off out of the land of the living. I will not then, though I am encouraged to it by a passage of Scripture, I will not tempt God by demanding of him a proof of his favour, which he does not choose to give. Father, not my will, but thine be done."

He afterwards made some reflections on the effects which his miraculous powers might produce upon the world. "I can, by means of these powers, raise for myself a kingdom which shall embrace all the nations of the earth, which shall surpass in

glory all that has ever been seen or known. But it must be by breaking my allegiance to my heavenly king, it must be by disobeying the commands of Him by whose authority I am enabled to work these miracles. I am satisfied. My kingdom is not of this world. I look for my eternal reward at the right hand of the majesty of heaven."

This explanation is simple, clear, and to me satisfactory. It is free from all those inconsistencies and contradictions which arise from supposing either the real or visionary interposition of the Devil, and it is justified by the use of similar phraseology both in the Old and New Testament, where the suggestions of the Devil, or of Satan, are put for the temptations to which we are exposed from ourselves. Let not any one say that it degrades the character of our Lord and Master. Dr. Farmer has shewn, and none can deny, that he was subject to temptation. He bore our nature, and there is not a single feeling or affection which belongs to man, however innocent or even praise-worthy, but may become the source of temptation and sin. It is not of the slightest consequence whether the temptation proceed from within or without. It cannot be charged to us as a sin, that a thought of what is evil has passed through our minds. It is in cherishing those thoughts till they become wishes, and those wishes till they ripen into actions, that guilt consists; and there cannot be a higher or nobler effort of virtue, there cannot be a stronger proof of our love to God, and our aspirations after the purity and perfection of his nature, than that we should banish the thought and conquer the desire of evil, as soon as it rises within us.

It seems to me impossible that this temptation of our Saviour should have arisen except from his own thoughts. Let any one reflect a moment upon what would be his own sensations, were the very principle of evil himself to stand before him, either really or in a dream or vision, and offer him the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, upon the condition of his paying to the offerer the homage due to God alone. Would not his whole soul revolt from the proposal? What other ideas than those of horror and disgust would enter his mind?—Could then the pure and perfect Jesus be liable to temptation from such a being? God forbid that I should think so. Who is chargeable with imputing to our Lord what is disgraceful and degrading, if not he who maintains that the worst of spirits had power to affect his mind for a moment?

I have thus, my friend, briefly stated my objections to Dr. Farmer's exposition, and my own views of our Saviour's temptation. That they may receive the sanction of your approbation is the hope of,
Yours as ever,
P.

ON THE USE AND MEANING OF THE PHRASE,
"HOLY SPIRIT."

THERE is perhaps no term or phrase of frequent occurrence in the New Testament, with which readers in general are more perplexed, and concerning the meaning of which they feel more doubtful, than that of "*holy ghost*", or "*holy spirit*." We see the words printed in our Bibles, and in other books, in capitals, or with capital initials, and it gives us the impression of a person or agent of high dignity; at the same time that the connexion in which it stands, and the scope of the passage, often assure us, that a person cannot be intended.

Two observations occur in the outset in our examination into the use and meaning of *holy spirit*, in the writings of the New Testament. The first is, that we find several other forms of expression, such as, *spirit of God*, *spirit of the Lord*, *spirit of Christ*, and *spirit* alone, to be used in the same sense as *holy spirit*, or *holy ghost*. The following is an example, in which three of the above phrases are, in a single sentence, used to mean the same thing, whatever it be, as "the *holy ghost*," which is in other passages often represented to be in christians, and to dwell in them. Rom. viii. 9. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the *spirit*, if so be that the *spirit of God* dwell in you: now if any man have not the *spirit of Christ*, he is none of his. But if Christ be in you, &c."

The second observation is, that we do not find the phrase in question, nor either of the synonymous phrases to have one uniform sense in which it is always used. On the contrary, we soon discover, when we come to read with a careful attention to its use, that it has several meanings, which in each case are to be learned only from the connexion in which it stands, and the scope of the passage in which it is found.

This observation will be supported by mentioning a few of the several senses, in which it may be shewn, that the *holy spirit*, and other parallel phrases, are used by the sacred writers.

1. In the first place, each of the phrases in question is sometimes used for *God himself*. The true meaning, in this use of it, the more readily occurs on account of its analogy to a similar mode of expression, which we have in constant use. I mean *the spirit of a man*. Now by the *spirit of a man*, or a *man's spirit*, no one ever dreams of any thing else being intended but the *man himself*. "I am glad," said Paul to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xvi. 17, 18.) of the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for they have refreshed *my spirit* and *yours*."

That is, they have refreshed *me* and *you*. Equally obvious is the meaning of the following texts: (Gal. vi. 18.) "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit*." (2 Tim. iv. 22.) "*The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit*," i.e. be *with thee*. Again, (1 Cor. ii. 11.) "*What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man, that is in him?*" In this, as in the preceding instances, we are at no loss what we are to understand by the *spirit of a man*. It is the man himself. Now, when, proceeding in the use of the same language, he says in the following verse, "*even so the things of God knoweth no one, but the spirit of God*;" can there be any doubt, whether he applies the same language in a similar manner, meaning by it, none but *God himself* knoweth them?

This use of *holy spirit* and *spirit of God*, we meet with not unfrequently in the Old Testament. (Psalm cxxxix. 7.) "*Whither shall I go from thy spirit?*" i. e. from *thee*; for he immediately adds;—"If I ascend up into heaven, *thou* art there." The prophet Isaiah, (lxiii. 10.) speaking of the ingratitude of the people of Israel to God for their distinguished blessings, says, "*They rebelled and vexed his holy spirit*." By comparing this passage with others in which the same conduct is referred to, we are left at no loss in what sense we are to understand *his holy spirit* here. Thus in the history of the transactions, (Num. xiv. 11.) we learn, that when the Israelites, hearing the report of those, who had been sent forward to search the land of Canaan, were on the point of revolting, and returning back to Egypt, "*The Lord said unto Moses, how long will this people provoke me?*" And in the Psalms which were composed in reference to these same transactions, in which this spirit of ingratitude and rebellion, which burst forth on several occasions, is alluded to; it is said, (Psl. lxxviii. 56.) "*They tempted and provoked the Most High God*." (Psl. xcv. 9.) "*Your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works*." These passages are evidently parallel, and intended to convey the same meaning. The historian, the sacred poet, and the prophet, referring to the same transaction, unquestionably meant to represent *the same person*, as the object of it, by the several terms, *Jehovah*, *Most High God*, and *his holy spirit*.

That this is the most usual meaning of *the spirit of God* in the Old Testament, I believe, will hardly admit a question. It is also as uniformly the meaning of *my spirit*, *his spirit*, and *thy spirit*, whenever they occur in reference to God. When God speaks of *his spirit*, we have as little apprehension that another person, distinct from the speaker, is intended, as when a man speaks of his spirit. Nor is this use of *the spirit of God*,

and the *holy spirit*, confined to the Old Testament. Very clear and decisive instances of it occur in the New. "Know ye not, says Paul, (1 Cor. vi. 19.) that your body is the temple of the *holy ghost*?" That by the *holy ghost* is here meant *God* himself, appears from two or three parallel passages. (1 Cor. iii. 16.) "Know ye not that ye are the temple of *God*?" (2 Cor. vi. 16.) "Ye are the temple of the living *God*, as *God* hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them."

2. There is, in the second place, a class of texts, in which the phrases in question appear to be used, not to express the person of *God*, as in the preceding cases, but the *power* of *God*, his *wisdom*, his *will*, or his *command*. (Mich. ii. 7.) "Is the *spirit* of the Lord straitened?" (Is. lix. 1.) "Behold the Lord's *hand* is not shortened, that it cannot save." These texts are evidently parallel, intended to express the same meaning. There can be no doubt that the former prophet, by the *spirit* of the Lord, meant the same, as the latter did by the Lord's *hand*; viz. *his power*. Is the power of *Jehovah* restrained?

In one of the eloquent replies of Job, (xxvi. 12, 13.) a remarkable instance occurs, in which, speaking of the majesty of *God*, and his wonderful works, the turn of expression is varied four times, without changing its meaning, in a single sentence. "He divided the sea by his *power*, and by his *understanding* he smiteth through the proud: by his *spirit* he hath garnished the heavens, his *hand* hath formed the crooked serpent." The intelligent reader needs no comment on this passage. He understands the same divine operation to be expressed, and not four distinct persons to be intimated, by the several terms *power*, *understanding*, *spirit*, and *hand*. In a similar manner, in the following passage, (Psl. xxxiii. 6.) "By the *word* of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the *breath*, or *spirit*, of his mouth,"—he understands the *word*, in one part of the sentence, and the *breath* or *spirit* in the other, to mean the same thing, viz: that divine energy by which all things were brought into being. It may be proper, however, to inform the reader, unlearned in polemic divinity, that this interpretation is not assented to by all. Some have discovered in this text the three persons of the trinity: the first person, the Father, designated by the term *Lord*, or *Jehovah*; the second, or the Son, by the *word*; the third, or the *Holy Ghost*, by the *breath*, or *spirit*.

Whether such interpretations are calculated to do honor to the scriptures, the common sense of sober enquirers will determine.

Our Saviour, reasoning with the Jews respecting his authority as a divine teacher, and the power by which he wrought

miracles, said to them, (Matt. xii. 28.) "If I cast out demons by the *spirit* of God, then is the kingdom of God come unto you." By another Evangelist, (Luke xi. 20.) he is represented, on the same occasion, as saying, "If I with the *finger* of God cast out demons, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." The two forms of expression then, *spirit of God* and *finger of God*, were understood by the Evangelists to mean the same thing. What that meaning was, we learn from our Saviour, when he said on another occasion, (John xiv. 10.) "The *Father* that dwelleth in me, he doth the works." We have it confirmed also by Peter, in his speech on the day of Pentecost. (Acts ii. 22.) "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and signs, and wonders, which *God did* by him." The *spirit of God* then, and the *finger of God*, were the *power of God*, or God himself, the Father, dwelling in Jesus Christ.

Similar examples of the use of the *spirit of God* for the *power of God*, might be multiplied. One more only shall be mentioned. (2 Cor. iii. 3.) "Ye are the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the *spirit* of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." The allusion in this text is to the two tables received by Moses on Mount Sinai, on which were written the ten commandments. Now turning to the account of this transaction in Exodus and Deuteronomy, (Ex. xxxi. 18, Deut. ix. 10.) we find them there declared to be written with the *finger of God*. The Apostle therefore probably meant the same thing, when he said, written by the *spirit of God*. Each was intended to express an effect produced supernaturally, by the power of God himself.

3. The terms under consideration are used, again, sometimes to express a single gift or endowment, such as, *power*, *wisdom*, *courage*, or *skill* in some art,—whether properly miraculous, or only possessed in an extraordinary degree, so as to qualify the person for some special office or service. Thus is the bodily strength of Sampson spoken of, and the impulse by which he exerted it;—the valour and intrepidity of Othniel, of Jephtha, and of Gideon, in conducting the armies of their country, and delivering it from the power of its enemies. In each instance it is said, the *spirit of the Lord*, came upon him. (Judges xiv. 5, 6. iii. 10. xi. 29. vi. 84.)

A similar mode of expression is applied to Moses and Joshua in reference to the wisdom and skill, with which they conducted the nation, administered its affairs, and settled it in the promised land. Particularly, when the seventy elders were appointed to relieve Moses from a part of the burden of govern-

ment, of which he complained, as being greater than he could bear. (Num. xi. 16, 17.) "The Lord said unto Moses, I will take of the *spirit*, which is upon thee, and will put it upon them." There can be no doubt, I think, what is here meant. It was not, that something was literally to be taken from Moses on that occasion, and given to the elders who were to be his assistants: nor that an exalted person or being was to depart from him, and reside in them. They were to be qualified for the office to which they were to be appointed, and fitted for its duties, by possessing talents resembling his; by being endowed, as he was, with eminent wisdom, integrity, meekness, and impartiality.

Another instance of a similar application of the phrase *spirit of God*, occurs in the account we have of the designation of persons to construct the tabernacle and its furniture. It is applied to that ingenuity and mechanical skill, by which Bezaleel and Aholiab were qualified to superintend the work, and to understand all the directions, and to execute the commands, which Moses had received. It was said, (Ex. xxxi. 1, 7.) "That they were filled with the *spirit of God*, in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, in cutting of stone, in carving of wood, in the work of the engraver, the weaver, and the embroiderer." Expressions of similar import are applied also to all those, whom they were directed to teach the skill which they possessed in these arts, and to employ as assistants in executing the work. (Ex. xxxvi. 1, 2.)

In the writings of the prophets, the expressions continually occur of "giving, sending, pouring out the *spirit of God*," not in such a manner as to lead to the thought, that a person is intended; but sometimes to express the grant of a gift, power, privilege, or blessing, and sometimes a disposition produced, temper imparted, or change of moral character.

A similar application of the language and terms in question runs through the New Testament. They are used to express the power, by which our Saviour performed miracles in proof of his divine mission; and the powers and gifts also, which were imparted to his Apostles after his ascension, by which they were qualified to go forth into the world, with knowledge and courage to execute their commission, and with supernatural powers to support their claims as divine messengers; to prove (John xvii. 18.) that they were sent into the world by Christ, as he was sent into the world by the Father.

What was meant by the promise of the *Comforter*; (John xvi. 7.) the *holy ghost* with which they were to be baptized; (Acts i. 5.) they learned, when they found themselves, after

the ascension of their master, endowed with supernatural powers. By these *powers*, sometimes denominated the *spirit of God*, sometimes the *spirit of Christ*, sometimes the *holy spirit*, they were qualified for the work to which they were appointed, that of converting the world to the christian faith.

In express allusion to the effusion of miraculous powers thus to take place afterward on the day of Pentecost, the Evangelist John had said, (in explanation of a declaration of our Saviour,) that "he spake it of *the spirit*, which they that believe on him should receive; for," adds he, "*the holy ghost* was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John vii. 39.) i.e. those miraculous powers, which were exercised by the apostles at the time when he wrote, were not yet in existence, had not yet been bestowed, were not to be bestowed, till after the ascension of their master. So also, when the christians whom Paul found at Ephesus, in answer to his question, whether they had yet received the *holy ghost*, replied, that they "had not even heard, that there was a holy ghost;" their meaning was, that they had not heard of the existence of those miraculous powers; for it is added, "when Paul laid his hands upon them, the *holy ghost* came upon them, and they *spake with tongues.*"

4. Another use of *spirit* and *holy spirit*, too important and of too frequent occurrence to be omitted, is that by which they express the moral influence employed by God in *any way*, for the purpose of producing in men holiness and virtue; or any of the effects of that influence, i. e. the disposition, temper, and habits thus produced. Thus, when Stephen says to the Jews, (Acts vii. 51.) "Ye do always resist the *holy ghost*, as your fathers did, so do ye;"—he must mean, by the *holy ghost*, all those means, which God employed in present and preceding dispensations to effect the great ends of his moral government. All these they had resisted, and found means to prevent their effects and defeat their design.

In the next preceding chapter also, (Acts vi. 3, 5.) when the qualifications for the office of deacons are mentioned, viz. : "that they be full of the holy ghost and wisdom;" or, as it is without the article, "a holy spirit and wisdom," there seems good reason for supposing, when we consider the design of the office, that a moral quality, *holiness*, was meant, and not a spiritual gift: As also, when it is said of Stephen, after his election to the office, that he was "full of faith, and a holy spirit;"—And when on another occasion, the same language was applied to Barnabas, (Acts xi. 24.) "He was a good man, full of the holy spirit and of faith." This interpretation however, as to the last cases, is not to be urged with entire confidence; since, with respect to these persons, appointed to the office of deacon, one

of them, we are afterward expressly told, and another of them, we have reason from the circumstances of the history to believe, were endowed with miraculous powers. The words *may* therefore here, as in other cases, have been used to express spiritual gifts, and not a moral quality.

Several other uses of the words *spirit*, *spirit of God*, *holy spirit*, &c. having no connexion with the design of this essay, may be passed without notice.

One other use of them, however, by christians in general, probably believed to be their most common use, requires to be distinctly considered.

For although some one of the meanings already mentioned will furnish, as all must admit, a satisfactory explanation of most of the texts in which either of the terms in question occur; there are some to which, in the minds of many, neither of them is applicable. Personal characteristics, it is thought, are employed by the sacred writers in such a manner, as is consistent only with the notion of a distinct Agent or Being, of an exalted character, to which they belong, and that the several terms we are considering, are used as the name of that Agent.

The *spirit*, or *holy spirit*, it is alleged, is described as possessing the attributes, and performing the functions of a person. It is described as understanding, willing, and acting. (1 Cor. ii. 11, &c.) "It knoweth all things, searcheth even the deep things of God, and revealeth them to men." It is represented as "speaking to men," pleading with them, and interceding for them; as bearing testimony to the Saviour, reproving, teaching, bringing to remembrance, and being grieved with men for their perverseness, in neglecting its aids and rejecting its guidance. (Acts xxviii. 25. Rom. viii. 26. John xiv. xv. xvi. Eph. iv. 30.)

Now in order to satisfy ourselves whether real personality be necessarily implied in the use of such language, or not, it is to our purpose to examine other instances of the application of personal attributes by the sacred writers, where there can be no pretence, that a distinct person is intended. Both the Old and New Testament abound in examples of bold personification. Let us examine a few of them, in order to ascertain how near a resemblance they bear to the one in question.

"This stone," said Joshua to the Israelites, when he had confirmed the covenant with them in the land of Canaan, (Joshua xxiv. 26, 27.) "this stone shall be a witness unto us, for *it hath heard* all the words of the Lord, which he spake to us." In this instance, though a personal character could hardly have been more clearly expressed, no mistake is ever made as to the meaning of the passage. No reader ever imagines that

stone to have been an intelligent agent, as the words so clearly imply, literally listening to the ratification of the covenant, for the purpose of attesting the fact to future ages.

In some of the first chapters of Proverbs, (Ch. i. ii. iii. iv. viii. ix.) we have a remarkable instance of the personification of wisdom. Yet, though all the attributes of person seem to be applied, not in single epithets only, but in continued discourse, in lively description, in variety of action, we can have no doubt that a figurative and not a real person is intended. We are perfectly satisfied that a mere allegorical person, and not a real being or agent is meant, when she is declared to have "buildd her house, furnished her table, mingled her wine, sent forth her maidens to invite her guests; and from the high places, from the gates, the entrance of the city, to utter her voice, proclaim her warnings, offer her instructions, and pronounce her benedictions on those who will hear, and her reproofs against those who reject, her offers and despise her counsels."

What life and vigour does Paul infuse into his Epistles, by his bold personification of sin and death! (Rom. v. 14, 17. vi. 12, 14, 17, 23. 1 Cor. xv. 26, 55—57.) representing them as having power, exercising dominion, reigning over men, and being enemies; yet without ever misleading the judgment of the reader into the apprehension that he is describing real persons.

How beautiful, again, is St. Paul's picture of charity drawn in the 13th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians! Yet, though it presents us throughout with the attributes of a *person*, instead of the characteristics of a virtue, no one is led into a mistake; or has a doubt whether or not a real person be meant.

These instances, it seems to me, are sufficiently parallel to those, in which the *personality of the holy spirit* is supposed to be expressed, to furnish a satisfactory explanation of, at least, the most of them; since they shew, that a similar mode of interpretation is required, and is perfectly satisfactory, when applied to the language used by the same writers on other subjects.

But there is one passage, which may be thought to require a more distinct consideration, because more stress is laid on it than on any other single passage, as a proof of the personality of the spirit; and because the personal characteristics in it are supposed to be more difficult to explain on any other ground, but that of a literal personality, than those expressed on any other occasion. I refer to our Saviour's discourse to his disciples on the evening before his crucifixion, contained in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of John.

In order to console them on that occasion, and prepare them for the loss they were so soon to sustain, he promised to send them "another comforter to abide with them for ever." This comforter, he tells them, is the *spirit of truth*, who was to guide them into all truth. It is the holy ghost, whom the Father," said he, "will send in my name; he will teach you all things, and will bring all things to your remembrance. He will not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that will he speak, and he will shew you things to come. He will glorify me, for he will receive of mine, and shew it unto you. Him I will send unto you, and when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment."

Now the meaning of these passages is to be ascertained by attending to the three following things: viz.

1. By comparing the language of our Saviour in this discourse with that, which was used by him on other occasions, when evidently speaking of the same thing.

2. By observing how this promise was actually fulfilled, as related in the subsequent history.

3. And then, by placing this in comparison with other acknowledged instances of personification to be found in the sacred writings, so as to see whether the difference be such, that while one is confessed to be a figurative person only, the other cannot be so.

1. In the first place then, the several terms used by our Saviour on this occasion, viz. the *comforter*, the *spirit of truth*, and the *holy ghost*, or *holy spirit*, are manifestly used to mean one and the same thing; and there is nothing to lead us to the supposition, that *holy spirit*, thus used as synonymous to *comforter*, is used in any new or uncommon sense. Besides, when our Saviour said, "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever;" can we have any doubt that he meant the same thing, as when he said to them after his resurrection, according to the representation of another evangelist, (Matt. xxviii. 20.) "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?" So also, whatever was meant by the *spirit of truth* to guide them into all truth, and the *holy spirit* to teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance; can there be any question whether the same were not also meant, when on another occasion he expressed the guidance and aid they should enjoy, in executing the commission which they were to receive, by saying, (Luke xxi. 15.) "I will give you a *mouth and wisdom*, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist." (Matt. x. 20.) "It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the *spirit*

of your Father, that speaketh in you." The promise also, which we find in immediate connexion with that of the comforter, as it seems to be but a repetition of the same promise in other words, may be considered as helping us to understand the meaning of the other. "I will not leave you comfortless, *I will come unto you.*" In what sense was he to *come to them*, and, as expressed on the other occasion, to *be with them always, even to the end of the world*? Not personally, but by that being, person, power, influence, or what ever it be, which had just been spoken of as the Comforter, the spirit, the spirit of the Father, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of truth, the holy spirit.

2. Let us now, in the second place, look into the subsequent history, and see what account we can find of the manner, in which these promises were actually fulfilled. No interpretation of a promise can be more fair or satisfactory than that, which is drawn from its fulfilment. It is the interpretation of him who made it, and must be supposed more competent than any other to decide in what sense it was meant to be understood.

A few days after our Saviour's ascension, his disciples were assembled together at Jerusalem by the express injunction of their master, when, alluding to his former promise, he said to them, (Luke xxiv. 49.) "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with *power from on high.*" They tarried at Jerusalem accordingly until the day of Pentecost, when the promise was fulfilled; not as a literal interpretation of the promises, on which they relied, might have led them to expect, by the appearance of a great personage to live among them, to be their leader, and to supply the place of their ascended Lord; nor yet by *his* personal return to them; but by the gift of extraordinary powers, by which they were enabled to perform miracles, to speak in other tongues, were enlightened with a knowledge of the whole scheme of the Gospel, were enabled to preach it with undaunted courage, and to support labours, dangers, and sufferings, in propagating it, with inflexible firmness and resolution.

No other account of the fulfilment of those promises is given. No intimation do we find that any other was expected. And we meet with frequent allusion to *this* in the subsequent history and the Epistles. The persons thus endued with miraculous powers, were said to be *filled with the holy ghost*, to be baptized with the *holy ghost*. The *spirit* was said to be *poured out upon them*. (Acts ix.) And the miracles which they performed in the exercise of these powers are sometimes mentioned as done by *Christ*, sometimes by *God*, sometimes

“through the effectual working of the power of God.” (Eph. iii. 7.)

Thus when Peter, by the power thus communicated to him, cured the paralytic man at Lydda, (Acts ix. 32.) he said, “Eneas, *Jesus Christ* maketh thee whole;” a mode of expression different from what we should have expected, if by the *holy ghost* which fell upon him on the day of Pentecost, was meant, not a *power only*, but a *person*, and a person distinct from *Jesus Christ*.

Whatever was meant (Acts ii. 33.) by the “promise of the *holy ghost*,” fulfilled in what took place on the day of Pentecost, the same was meant (Luke iii. 22.) by the “*holy ghost*,” which descended upon *Jesus Christ* himself at his baptism; and whatever was meant, when it was said (Acts ii. 4.) that the disciples were filled with the “*holy ghost*” on the former occasion, the same was meant, when on the latter, it is said, (Luke iv. 1.) that *Jesus* “was full of the *holy ghost*, when he returned from Jordan,” after his baptism. But in this case, the supposition that a person was meant, and not a power or influence, will seem to imply, that the miracles of our Saviour were wrought, not by his *own power*, nor, as he himself asserted, (John xiv. 10.) by “the *Father who dwelt in him*,” but by another person.

3. If, in the third place, we compare the example under consideration with other acknowledged instances of personification in the Scriptures, do we find such a difference as to justify us in the conclusion, that while *those* are understood to refer only to a figurative person, *this* cannot be so understood?

Let the instances which have before been selected, be now brought again before the reader's view. Let him compare the discourse of our Saviour in John, relative to the *comforter*, the *spirit of truth*, the *holy ghost*, with Solomon's beautiful portrait of wisdom, and Paul's lively description of charity. Will he find personal attributes any where ascribed to the *holy spirit* in greater variety, or with more distinctness, than in these instances they are applied to *wisdom* and *charity*? Let him recur, also, to the personal epithets applied by Paul to sin and death. Death is, indeed, so constantly in the common language of life, represented in personal characters, that it never fails to present itself to us under that image; and though no one actually believes it to be a real person, the image has so fastened itself upon our minds, that it costs no small effort to correct the impression.

Other personifications less remarkable, will yet serve to illustrate the one in question. I will mention only one more, that of the *word of God*. Now, when we read (Heb. xi. 3. 2 Pet.

iii. 5.) that "the worlds were framed by the *word of God*;" that "by the *word of God* the heavens were of old:" we have no doubt that the agency of *God himself* is meant, in the same manner as in the expression, (Gen. i. 3.) "*God said*, let there be light and there was light." We perceive only a figurative, but far from unusual mode, of saying that *God himself* created the heavens, the worlds, and the light. The same is meant as when it is said of those, who call upon God in their afflictions, (Psl. cvii. 20.) "*He sendeth his word* and healeth them;" and of the ice and frosts of winter, (Psl. cxlvii. 18.) "*He sendeth out his word* and melteth them."

There is one other view of the subject, which it may not be useless just to suggest. It will be admitted by all, whatever their opinion respecting the personality of the spirit, that the terms *spirit*, *spirit of God*, &c. are commonly used in such a manner, as evidently not to mean a person. Now, let the experiment be made upon some other word, for the purpose of ascertaining whether another instance can be found of a term sometimes used as the name of a person, but more commonly employed in a different manner. No such example, it is presumed, can be produced. There are indeed instances, in which *Christ* is used, by a very common metonymy, for the religion, which he taught, and Moses for the law which he promulgated: the names of the prophets also, and of each separate prophet, for the books that bear their names. But this is so rare, compared with the literal use of the name to express the person himself, that no one was ever led to doubt, whether in their common use they did not refer to real persons. It would be impossible, by any ingenuity, to explain them as meaning nothing more than an allegorical personality. It never did, nor could enter into the mind of any reader of the bible, that *Christ* or *Moses* were not real, but only allegorical persons.

But in the case in question, on the commonly received opinion, the name of a most important person and powerful agent is usually employed to express a mere power or gift, or the influence or agency of *another person*. The presumption therefore is strong, that the opinion itself is without foundation; a presumption, which nothing but positive proof to the contrary can remove; and such proof we do not find.

From the whole view of the subject, we are brought to the following conclusion. That the phrase under consideration is used by the sacred writers in a variety of senses, and what is the true meaning is to be ascertained in each instance by the same rules of interpretation, which are applied in other similar cases. That, whenever it is used as a person, it is the person of the Father; as it is sometimes expressed, *the spirit of the*

Father ; and that there is not sufficient reason for supposing, that it is ever used to mean a being, agent, or person distinct from God the Father.

Note.—For a more thorough investigation of this subject, than could be brought within the limits of an essay of reasonable length for a periodical publication, the reader is referred to the first postscript of Dr. Lardner's Letter on the Logos,—and the translation of "Schleusner on the meanings of *πνευμα* in the New Testament," in the first volume of the General Repository, for April, 1812. In one or the other of those tracts, he will find some explanation of every text, that is usually considered as having any relation to the subject.

ILLUSTRATION OF JOHN, xiv. 31.

"But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence."

The reader will instantly perceive that the first clause of this verse is defective. There is evidently something wanted to complete its meaning ; and different translators have resorted to different expedients, for representing it fairly and fully. In most of our recent English translations, the words "this must be," or words of a similar import, are interposed, as if understood. "*But this must be* that the world, &c." This method is certainly without any critical objections : for a similar ellipsis is found in other parts of the writings of this same apostle. We read in the 25th verse of the next chapter : "*but this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law ; they hated me without a cause:" and again, (1 John ii. 19.) "*but they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

Some critics have supposed the passage to be complete in itself, without the aid of any supplementary words ; and render it thus : "but that the world may know that I love the Father, even as the Father hath given me commandment, so I do." Of this opinion, were the eminent Grotius, Bengel, and others : but their construction is too forced a one to be readily admitted. Mr. Wakefield and Bishop Pearce agree in connecting the passage with the preceding verse as a part of it. There would be no objection to this, provided a natural and appropriate meaning could thus be obtained : for the punctuation of the Greek Testament is clearly without any authority. The

most ancient manuscripts are written in continuous lines, without any division of the words, much less of the sentences. In the first printed editions the points were used arbitrarily; and Stephens is said to have varied them in every successive edition which he published. It was the same editor who divided the New Testament into its present order of verses; which is no older than the year 1551. Those learned men, however, were by no means happy in their emendation. Mr. Wakefield's translation is this: (30) "the ruler of this world is coming; and I have nothing to do (31) but to convince the world that I love the Father, &c." That of Bishop Pearce has still less to recommend it: "the Prince of this world cometh, and he shall find nothing in me, but that the world may know that I love the Father, &c."

It would present a very simple and beautiful meaning, merely to connect the passage in question with the remaining part of the verse: "but that the world may know that I love the Father, and do even as the Father has given me commandment, arise, let us go hence." They were to go, it will be remembered, to the garden of Gethsemane, where a most affecting proof was to be given of our Saviour's resignation to the whole will of his heavenly Father. We thus not only solve every difficulty, and perceive a very appropriate and touching allusion; but we relieve the abruptness, which the latter member of this verse would have, considered as an independent sentence. This abruptness is disguised in some measure by the arrangement of the chapters and verses; since most readers are accustomed to regard the end of a chapter as the end of a subject: but it will be immediately discerned, by reading the 31st verse of the 14th, and the 1st of the 15th chapter in continuation, as successive portions of the same discourse.

After these remarks were written, it was discovered, that this mode of reading the passage was adopted in Martin's edition of the French Bible, published in Amsterdam, in folio, 1707, and in 4to, 1722;—and is found in the German version of the celebrated Michaelis.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OUR readers doubtless recollect that in a review of "Eddy's Reasons," which appeared in the first number of this work, it was said, that there is in this town a Society of professed Unitarian Baptists. The statement has occasioned a good deal of enquiry, and the truth of it has been publicly denied. We

perhaps have not been sufficiently anxious to justify ourselves in the assertion, and have delayed doing it longer than we ought. We, however, at length lay before the publick a letter from one of the Society alluded to, written in answer to enquiries upon this subject, from which it may be judged how far we were correct, and how far we erred.

The following is the letter of enquiry.

To Mr. HENRY EMMONS.

SIR,

I trust you will excuse the freedom of the following enquiry, when you consider its importance.

In a number of the *Christian Disciple*, published last March, it was said, that "there is a society of professed Unitarian Baptists in Boston." The allusion was to the Society of which you are a member, and the writer supposed that his assertion was unquestionably correct.

But the Editors of the *Baptist Missionary Magazine* have denied it; and, if I understand them right, have asserted the contrary with regard to your church. It has also been denied in other ways. Now, Sir, if the *Disciple* has made an unfounded assertion, it ought to be retracted; if not, it ought to be defended. It was made upon the authority of a gentleman, who received his impression respecting the fact from a conversation with yourself. In order to give entire satisfaction, will you have the goodness to make explicit answer to the following questions?

Are the believers with whom you worship, rightly called Baptists?

Does the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead, usually called the Trinity, make a part of their belief? Or, is there a division of opinion among them in regard to it?

My only object in this, as in other things, is, to know the truth, and tell the truth. Will you, therefore, write me an early reply, and believe me with christian salutations.

yours, &c.

The following answer was returned.

Boston, 8th Month, 6, 1819.

RESPECTED FRIEND,

When thy letter came I was not at home; but, with pleasure, freedom and correctness, I will answer it.

As to the paragraph inserted in the *Christian Disciple* in 3d Month last,—“Of there being a Society of professed Unitarian Baptists in Boston”—I have had the question repeatedly asked me.

In answer I will say, We are a small Company of Brethren, formed together for religious worship, in the year 1803, a part of whom came out, and others were turned out, from the Calvinistic Baptists, because our minds became more enlightened in some points of doctrine which thwarted the principles or creeds of their churches; and the liberties we wanted, of males and females “speaking one by one,” could not be granted us.

After we had embodied together, we thought best to take no sectarian name upon us, but we would call ourselves *Christians*, the original name by which believers were called in the days of old; frequently we are known or called by others, Freewill Baptists, as our members are baptized by immersion, as the Baptists do.

As to sentiments, we have no creeds or platforms to sign or assent to; but require of persons admitted, a relation to the church of their change of heart, &c. Yet, I plainly see, and will clearly exhibit to thee, what is desired in the first assertion. Though we have never called ourselves a professed Unitarian Baptist Society,—yet, if the following belief, among our members, constitutes the substance of the assertion made in the *Christian Disciple*, the publisher of the sentence has nothing to fear from the correctness of it, nor from the stand he has publickly taken in exhibiting truth, (I need not say in defending it) for the doctrine needs no supporters or props of man to make its consistency, glory, and lustre appear in the eyes of good men, who are not prejudiced “with the traditions of their fathers.”

The confused ideas respecting God and his dear Son, adopted and embraced among even pious people themselves, have been a great grief to the sons of Zion in all ages, since inventions of men were first brought into the church. Yet, though much noise and contention among them have been, respecting the character of God and Christ, there is a right, and there is a wrong report gone out in the world: to embrace the true, and arrest the false, where it can be done “without hurting the wine or the oil,” certainly every follower of Christ ought so to do.

As to the question asked in thy letter to me, “Does the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead, usually called the Trinity, make a part of our belief? I answer, *no*. Some there may be: I know them not; generally, it is not the belief of our members. For our preachers, and leading brethren, who have

gifts in speech, frequently expatiate, in exhortations, upon the glorious character of Christ, "not, as we be slanderously reported," that we degrade, and lower down the illustrious, great and holy character of the Son of God! yet our brethren and preachers are always careful to avoid that confused mass of ideas, of asserting that Christ is God!! but rather exhibiting him to the assembly as the Mediator, Redeemer, Intercessor, and High Priest of Zion. Though some of the Prophets called him Mighty God, &c. Christ himself said, *men* are called gods. But to return.

The very Hymn Books we use, are another proof of the belief of our members, not only here, but scattered over the United States—in all of them we have the same ideas, some of them corrected from the mistakes of their authors, viz. Watts has one verse which looks grossly incorrect to us; therefore we have altered the third line, to

When Christ, the glorious Saviour, died.

" Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When God, the Mighty Maker, died,
For man the creature's sin."

Now this is not true; for God never died, never eat and drank, never was weary, never was asleep in the sides of a ship, &c. But all this was true of his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things. We rationally conclude, if a King appoints any one heir of all things in his kingdom, he that appoints is greater than the appointed. Joseph was a type of Christ, appointed lord over all Egypt; yet in the throne there was one greater than he.

I hope what I have written, though lengthy, will be satisfactory to thee. If more witnesses are wanting for my assertions, I am at no loss to raise them. Farewell.

HENRY EMMONS.

THOUGHTS ON THE PROSPECTS OF RELIGION.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

IT is pleasant to look upon the bright side; in regard, especially, to the progress of truth and the improvement of mankind. We confess, that we are fond of indulging in such views. It is a disposition, we are sensible, that is apt to betray one into fanciful opinions, which will not bear the test of sober examination; and into an imagination of this nature we have possi-

bly been led in entertaining the idea, that rational religion is upon the advance;—that religion, we mean, which leans to reason; which never contradicts her fundamental principles; though its doctrines and sanctions are dependant upon a higher authority than hers.

We have thought, that rational beings must naturally incline to rational sentiments, when fairly presented to their minds. We have considered the victories, which reason has obtained over errors, once as generally embraced, as they are now generally exploded; and that the conquests, it has gained, it has rarely lost. We have attended to the rules of exposition, which rational christians, so termed, apply to the sacred volume; and we cannot but think they will ultimately prevail; being founded on the reasonable presumption, that the language of the scriptures is to be explained according to the established laws, by which other writings are interpreted;—laws, which possess the indispensable recommendation of being the only ones, which enable us to construe the Bible, without filling it with contradictions, and doing violence to the plainest truths of natural religion, which are equally truths of revelation. We have been gratified with observing, how many of the principal members of society are men of candid feelings and temperate sentiments on religious subjects. We have noticed, that enlargement of views in regard to those controversies, which are agitated among christians, is *apt* to accompany enlargement of mind in other respects; and it may be presumed, therefore, is increasing with the diffusion of knowledge and learning.

But not the smallest of our reasons for expecting a more extensive spread of rational opinions and liberal feelings in the church, are such, as we derive from those christians themselves, among whom there exists, as we think, the most room for improvement in these respects.

In the first place, it is encouraging to remember to how large a portion of the sacred volume they have always applied those rules of interpretation, which their brethren contend should be equally applied to every part of it. None could be more ready than they, to reject a number of erroneous doctrines, on the ground of their intrinsic unreasonableness and incredibility; particularly those of transubstantiation and consubstantiation; notwithstanding, the letter of scripture may be urged in their behalf. It must appear surprising, we are sensible, that they have not long since pursued a similar course with some other doctrines, equally repugnant to our intuitive perceptions of possibility, and infinitely more so to our first principles of rectitude; especially when less supported by any passages of sacred writ, either literally or freely expounded. Can

they say, it may well be asked, that the existence of Christ's body in the sacramental bread is more inconceivable, than the existence of three persons in one being, each possessing his own distinct will, consciousness, and office; or will they undertake to produce any scripture, for the latter notion, that is more direct or explicit, than those words of our Saviour, "*This is my body*," upon which the former is grounded by the Lutherans and Papists! In like manner, with respect to the doctrine of total depravity, in vain do we look, it may be remarked, for one single passage to uphold this distinguishing article of Calvinism, equally pertinent and full with that, on which the Romanists have built the doctrine of transubstantiation, and equally unopposed by other portions of the Bible; while none can feel, that this Catholic tenet can compare, in horridness, with that of the final damnation of a great portion of our race for retaining a natural heart, which God alone could change, but which he chose to leave in the state, in which it came into existence. Notwithstanding our Calvinistic brethren, however, have not yet seen fit to extend rational principles of interpretation to every part of the sacred volume, since they continue to recognize their legitimacy, we do hope, they will one day pay them a consistent regard.

In the second place, we have much to expect, as we flatter ourselves, from that attention to biblical criticism, which is appearing among them. One of the finest scholars our country has produced in this department of sacred learning, has, in the opinion of some, arisen in their ranks. In many instances, no doubt, they will employ their critical learning with too little fairness and impartiality; especially they, who are more *interested* to uphold the fabrick of Calvinism; but gradually it must, we think, be apparent, that such works as Griesbach's New Testament, Schleusner's Lexicon, &c. cannot become popular with our students in divinity without producing such effects, as all must denominate happy, who are desirous of promoting a rational and consistent exposition of the scriptures.

In the third place, although a great clamour has been raised against new versions of the scriptures, various readings, and the like, proceeding in a great measure, no doubt, from want of due acquaintance with the subject; still, but too apparently designed, in some cases, to excite a stronger prejudice, than could, it should seem, have been entertained by the authors of the alarm; yet we are happy to learn, that the Old Greek text is giving place to Griesbach's, even in Calvinistic seminaries; while many of the most respectable orthodox critics on the other side of the water, have urged in strong terms the necessity of revising the common version of the Bible. Even the

celebrated passage respecting "the three, who bear witness in heaven," which has been so long urged, as one of the strongest texts in favour of the Trinity, is now losing its authority with its former advocates. A most respectable orthodox journal has pronounced it *disgraceful* to quote it. We cannot but think, that a number of passages in our common English version, which have been usually cited on the same side, will soon experience in a great degree, if not entirely, a similar fate; not indeed as spurious, but as inapplicable to the subject in debate; and that the progress of critical knowledge will ere long be found materially to have allayed the zeal of our Trinitarian brethren. This zeal, we are persuaded, must decline fast, as Christians shall agree, that the meaning of scripture on every subject it treats of, is to be determined by its general tenor; and that an inconsistent sense shall be attached to no passages, when any other can be found, which the passages will bear.

In the fourth place, we have leaned to the opinion, that what by many at the present day is denominated orthodoxy, compared with that of an earlier period, presents some features of amelioration. On this subject, however, we are not without a degree of jealousy, that our wishes have exercised too strong an influence over our judgment. We suspect, that orthodox congregations are less accustomed, than formerly, to hear of infants being justly liable to the eternal pains of hell. This doctrine, we have been ready to hope, was becoming more harsh to the public ear, even among those, who have been educated to a devout belief of the premises, from which it flows. If it be fact, that some degree of doubt is beginning to be entertained among our Calvinistic brethren, as to the justice of consigning infants to perdition, for belonging to the lineage, and possessing the natures, they had no power to refuse; shall the period never arrive, when a similar doubt will be felt, whether adults may, consistently with the rectitude of God, be doomed to the like fate for retaining the inborn dispositions, they had no power to change? It has afforded us some faint encouragement to find a number of orthodox doctrines stated, in the writings of their modern advocates, in terms as modified and unexceptionable as could be chosen. Edwards used to affirm that "all natural men's affections are governed by malice against God; and that they hate him worse than they do the devil." But though similar language has been heard from Calvinistic pulpits, even at the present day, the best received definition of total depravity, at this time, is *natural destitution of holiness*; a representation of our natures considerably meliorated in expression, and which, taken by itself, would require

little sacrifice of reason for its reception. For all must acknowledge, that holiness, considered as including religious knowledge and principle, is not an inborn, but an acquired quality ; and of course we are as naturally destitute of it, as we are destitute by nature of any attainments whatever. But we well know, that those, who adopt this definition of total depravity, are far from intending to place man's natural destitution of holiness on the same footing with his natural destitution of other things, which can only be acquired. They mean by it a moral deficiency resulting from the very nature of the heart ; and incurable, except by a grace, which is confined, as they say, to an elected few of our miserable species.

Calvin, and the older writers of his class, were wont to represent the death of Christ, as propitiating the Deity, and reconciling him to men. In one place he remarks, " Christ expiated by his own blood those sins, which made us hateful to God : and, he being our Intercessor, God became placable to us : (*iram ejus fuisse placatam*). " But says a late orthodox writer, " The sacrifice of Christ was never deemed by any, who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of atonement, to have made God placable ; but merely viewed as the means appointed by divine wisdom, by which to bestow forgiveness." [Magee.] The same author remarks, that " to the question, in what way does the death of Christ operate to the remission of sins, *every christian* will answer, ' I know not, nor does it concern me to know. It is enough, that this is declared by God to be the medium, through which my salvation is effected.' " It is unnecessary to say how far *they* are from confining themselves to this answer, who speak of " the flaming sword of divine wrath being extinguished in the blood of the Lamb ; " and who reason, that Christ must have been God, in order to give an infinite worth to his vicarious sufferings, endured under the infinite wrath of God to expiate an infinite sin ; though, while they deny that the divine nature of the Redeemer suffered, they leave it obscure why the pains of a sufferer, inferiour to God, might not have been sufficient. If, according to Dr. Magee, "*every Christian* will say, that he does not know, nor does it concern him to know, how the death of Christ operates to the remission of sin ; " we trust the more ingenuous part of his orthodox brethren, will not so insist upon our receiving their explanation of the atonement, as to require us to own, that our Saviour needed equality with the Father to give infinite worth to the sufferings, in which his human nature only was concerned. Such good men as the Divine we have just quoted, we cannot doubt, will in time succeed in persuading them, that they do not know how the death of Christ operates to the re-

mission of sin; if it be only by convincing them of the confusion, which has thus far attended their speculations on the subject.

The foregoing reflections, were particularly suggested to our minds by a discourse of the Rev. Lyman Beecher, which we remember to have seen about a year ago, and have recently run over again with some little attention. It was preached in Park Street, Boston, at the ordination of Mr. Dwight; and, as we do not recollect to have seen any notice of it in the *Christian Disciple*, or any similar work, we feel the more freedom in adverting to it, notwithstanding the period of its publication. Mr. Beecher is an orthodox divine of considerable eminence. He informs us, that "direct irresistible impulse moving the mind to action would not be moral government." He means, we conceive, direct irresistible impulse, without the intervention of motives. "Moral government is persuasion," he adds, "and the result of it, is voluntary action in the view of motives." "Free agency," he remarks, "cannot be conceived to exist in any other manner, than by the exhibition of motives to voluntary agents, the result of which shall be choice and action." Truly happy we are, that so just a representation of the essential nature of moral government and free agency, should proceed from the pen of an orthodox divine. We hope that the next edition of Griffin's *Lectures* may be corrected by Mr. Beecher. Dr. Griffin affirms, that "the heart is new, before the motives to holiness enter, and that motives must find the disposition already prepared to favour them, before they can act upon the mind; and again, that the heart must be forced by an act of divine power, as a king forcibly reduces his rebellious subjects, before it is prepared for motives." But, says Mr. Beecher, moral government is government by motives, without direct irresistible impulse; and free agency cannot be conceived to exist in any other manner, than by the exhibition of motives to voluntary agents. Consequently, unless he essentially dissent from his orthodox brother on the subject of regeneration, he must acknowledge that men are not treated as free agents, nor as under moral government, in the renewing of their affections; this being produced forcibly, says the reverend lecturer, before motives have *entered* the mind or can operate upon it. But if moral government be suspended, and free agency cease, with regard to the great end of moral government and the only blessing of free agency, the attainment of that holiness of heart which alone has the promise of everlasting life, why do Calvinistic divines make such vehement protestations of their holding to such government and agency?

"Without the aid of reason," says Mr. B. "the bible could not be known to be the will of God ; and reason," he adds, "is the judge of its meaning, according to the common rules of exposition." We surely could not wish for a more explicit disavowal of the sentiment, which is embraced by too many of his brethren, that the bible is not to be read like other books. He, at least, it may be presumed, will insist on their rendering some better *reason* of the hope that is in them, than is contained in the reply we are accustomed to hear from them ; that "reason cannot discover the doctrines of grace, by perusing the scriptures, as ordinary writings are perused ; and that so far as these doctrines are concerned, no unholy man can ever rise from the study of the sacred page, even speculatively the wiser."

"The appropriate meaning of the word reasonable," says Mr. B. "in its application to the laws of God, is the accordance of his laws and administration with what it is proper for God to do, in order to display his glory to created minds, and secure from everlasting to everlasting the greatest amount of created good. But who is competent," he asks, "with finite mind and depraved heart to test the revealed laws and administration of Jehovah by this rule ? Reason must ascend the throne of God, and from that high eminence dart its vision through eternity, and pervade with steadfast view immensity, to decide whether the precepts and doctrines contained in the bible come in their proper place, and are wise and good in their connexion with the whole." Would that such sentiments were more attended to by those, who building their system of theology upon their own view of what the illustration of divine glory requires, affirm, that sin and misery were designed to afford opportunity for the display of God's vindictive justice ; and that, consistently with his glory and the best good of the universe, God could not, without becoming incarnate, and offering an infinite atonement for sin in the person of his Son, have granted pardon to penitent man ; in a word, who soar so boldly into the regions of metaphysical divinity, as not only to mount above that knowledge of the Deity, which is commonly apprehended by reason, and which is every where disclosed to ordinary eyes, but too often to lose sight of it. We would even recommend to Mr. Beecher himself, to give additional force to the sentiments he has expressed upon this subject, by revising those parts of his sermon, in which he labours to shew, by reasons somewhat too subtle for our apprehension, that the doctrines and precepts of the bible "*do come in their proper place*, and are wise and good in their connexions." To evince the necessity of scriptural doctrines, as he understands them, to the *moral influence* of

divine legislation, is the leading design of his discourse. "The above truths," he observes, referring to the doctrine of eternal punishment and some others, "are essential to the moral influence of legislation generally." He finds in the nature of the human mind a rational test, by which, *a priori*, to determine what the doctrines of the scripture must be to render them promotive of evangelical affections. "To secure evangelical affections," he remarks, "the following truths are as essential, according to the nature of the human mind, as fire is essential to heat, or any natural cause to its appropriate effect: to wit, the doctrines of the Trinity, the atonement, total depravity, &c. The entire unholiness of the human heart is necessary," he says, "to beget just conceptions of guilt and danger; the doctrine of the Trinity, as disclosing a Saviour able to save," &c. Some may be ready to question the consistency of our reverend author in professing to have discovered *from the nature of the human mind*, that the doctrines of the bible, as he apprehends them, are essential to the moral influence of legislation in the production of evangelical affections, when a few pages back he has declared, that "reason must ascend the throne of God to decide, whether the precepts and doctrines contained in the bible come in their proper place and are wise and good in their connexion with the whole." He himself, it appears, has ascertained from the nature of the human mind, that the doctrines attributed to the word of God by Calvinists and Trinitarians *do come in their proper place*, and are wise and good in their connexion with this part of the universe; are essential to the production of evangelical affections and to the moral influence of legislation generally. If, after his strong and unqualified declaration of the impossibility of ascertaining, whether the precepts and doctrines of the bible are fully worthy of God, he perceives no impropriety in arguing thus *from the nature of the human mind*, it may be hoped, he will in future be willing to indulge a similar privilege to others. If he should, we trust that many, even of his own party, would say, that, judging by their reason merely according to the nature of the human mind, it would appear necessary to the moral influence of divine legislation, that men should be dealt with in a moral way; should be drawn by motives; and not be left dead and insensible by nature to the influence of motives, till by an act of Almighty power, with which a few only are favoured, they are made capable of feeling them. If we might settle our creeds by his rule, that "those doctrines are fundamental, without which the evangelical affections can have no" rational "being;" we should hesitate, whether the doctrine of man's being consigned to everlast-

ing misery for a native inborn depravity, curable only by an act of Almighty power, never exerted in his favour, should be admitted, for its fitness to inspire an ingenuous and supreme respect and affection for the equity and goodness of God. Neither should we be clear, that this doctrine ought to be inserted, for its tendency to produce self-condemnation in the sinner's breast. That many, who are self-condemned for their sins, are thorough believers in total depravity, we do not doubt; but that their remorse proceeds from a sense of natural impotency to think a good thought or exercise a good disposition, and not from that voice of conscience upbraiding them for their actual transgressions, which regards no creeds of man's invention, is not so certain to our minds. On the whole, we must thank Mr. Beecher for furnishing us a test of fundamental doctrines, so favourable to rational Christianity, as that of their adaptation, according to the nature of the human mind, to promote good feelings and the moral influence of divine legislation.

But we are more than suspicious that a test of this description was far from being proposed by him, with a view to exhibit the sentiments of his opponents in their most favourable light; on the other hand, it is painful to discover how much his discourse is adapted throughout to strengthen the prejudices, which many entertain against the Christians, who are not of his way of thinking. It is manifestly aimed, not at distant, solitary, or insignificant heretics, but at the great body of Unitarians and Anti-Calvinists, the usual objects of orthodox attack; with whose sentiments too many of his readers and hearers would not have wanted prejudice, we fear, to identify the wildest errors and absurdities, though he had been less distinct in indicating them to be the persons for whom his animadversions were intended. We are grieved, therefore, to see he has employed so large a portion of his performance in combating opinions, than which none could be more unlike those of his opponents in general. "It is *often* alleged," says Mr. B., "that there are so many opinions concerning the doctrine of the bible, that no man can know his own belief to be the true belief; and on the ground of this supposed inevitable uncertainty, is grounded the plea of universal charity and liberality. But who is this," he demands, "that libels his Maker, as the author of an obscure and useless system of legislation, which no subject can understand; so obscure, that they, who discard it, are little incommoded by the loss?" True, we would ask, who are they, who plead for charity on the ground he mentions? He intimates, they are a numerous class. But assuredly they are not the great body of those in this country, who are opposed to himself in sentiment. How can he believe, that their argument for charity is

founded on an alleged obscurity in the bible, so great as to render the scripture useless, and unintelligible to those, who read it? How could he deny, that they have arrived at a knowledge of the sacred writings satisfactory to their own minds; and that they believe similar satisfaction may be attained by all, who study the word of God with candour and diligence? How can it be his opinion, that they are charitable to others, only because unsettled themselves; and not because they consider it agreeable to the spirit and precepts of Christianity to attribute the errors of their brethren to pardonable ignorance, bias, and mistake, when to such causes they may be reasonably assigned; and to exclude none from the fold of Christ, who offer encouraging evidence of embracing essential truths so far, as is necessary for their salvation? We are but too sensible how wide the opinion has spread, that the charity of liberal Christians is of the kind he describes. But it is of a very different description. They may, it is true, class a number of religious debates among the doubtful disputations, which had better be dropped. But that they profess to see nothing clear and settled in the bible to fit it to be an useful system of legislation, or render it a blessing to its possessor, is a charge, which it might beforehand be difficult to suppose could be found upon record.

Another error, against which the zeal of Mr. Beecher is directed with great success, is the "maxim, that it is no matter what a man believes, provided his life be correct; no matter whether he believe or disbelieve in the divine existence, whether he love or hate the Lord; whether he repent of his sins or remain incorrigible; whether his motives be good or bad; if the mere motion of his lip or hand or foot be according to rule all is well." In confuting this miserable error he employs four of the most glowing pages of his discourse; and, not to consider him as designing simply to gratify us with a display of his argumentative skill, but as seriously intimating, that it is an error embraced by persons sufficient in number and importance to be worthy of notice; we are led to inquire, where does he find a class of this description, who would say, it could be immaterial under any circumstances whatever, whether a man believe or deny the existence of a God; whether he be penitent or impenitent; whether he be actuated by good or bad motives? Is it within the limits of possibility that any human being, however weak or ignorant, can fancy that he has found them in the great body of Unitarians and Anti-Calvinists? Who can suppose, that Mr. Beecher believes it to be the opinion of his opponents or of any person living, that any outward mechanical deportment, may constitute a person

religious and good, while accompanied with Atheism, impenitency, and bad motives?

"It is the opinion of some," he goes on to observe, "that the obvious meaning of the (sacred) texts, according to the established rules of expounding other books, is not to be regarded." We can only say, that though we know full well how many would be ready to think liberal Christians liable to the charge of violating the received laws of interpretation in their explanations of scripture, we were very little prepared to hear of *them*, that they openly *profess* to construe the bible without regard to these laws.

"Of the doctrines of the Trinity, total depravity, &c.," he observes, "that these doctrines are fundamental is evident from the violence, with which they have always been assailed. One," he adds, "denies the being of the lawgiver; another discards the statute book; a third subjects the laws of Jehovah to the censorship of reason, till he can believe without humility, obey without self denial, and disobey without fear of punishment. All representations of the character of man, at variance with the scripture account of his entire depravity, have for their OBJECT the evasion of the precept or penalty of the law. Faith, in the system of such persons, is intellectual assent to revealed truth without holiness. Those, who discard the doctrine of the Trinity, discard usually every other fundamental doctrine with it." These, and a multitude of similar passages toward the close of his discourse, sufficiently indicate, that it was not his design to leave it doubtful, what heretics he had in view. As concerned for the honour of the clerical profession, we regret that such sermons should be delivered; though we cannot doubt what the nature of that re-action will be, when the discovery shall be fully made, that persons may go the length of discarding the doctrine of total depravity, and even believing in the entire unity of the Godhead, without "rejecting every fundamental doctrine of the scriptures;" without "libelling their Maker, as the author of an obscure and useless system of legislation;" without "proposing it as their *object* to evade the precept or penalty of the law;" and without "deeming it immaterial, in any possible case, whether men believe or disbelieve the existence of God; be penitent or impenitent; be actuated by good or bad motives."

P. A.

ON THE LOVE OF THE WORLD.

THE language of the gospel concerning the Love of the World is very strong. It pointedly and decidedly condemns it, as unworthy a place in the Christian's heart. It denounces it as the hinderer at least, and finally the destroyer of true piety. If any man love the world, says the Apostle, the love of the Father is not in him. These two affections are inconsistent with each other; they cannot dwell together in the same soul. But one of them is the first and great commandment, which if we keep not, we want the essence of our religion. Therefore, the only thing to be decided is, what is the nature of these opposing principles; when we have determined this, we have only to govern ourselves accordingly.

There is an assertion of Paul apparently coincident with that above quoted from John. *The carnal mind is enmity against God*;—i. e. the sensual mind, the mind devoted to sensual things, is enmity against God; *for*, adds the Apostle, *it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*. Hence, the being *subject to God's law*, is a sign of love to him. "The mind, subject to sensual things, *cannot*, at the same time, be subject to the law of God, and therefore is enmity against God." Consequently, the mind *not* subject to sensual things, *may be* subject to the law of God, and therefore love him. Thus subjection to God's law is love to God. So says our Saviour; Then are ye my friends if ye keep my commandments. So says John: this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.

If this, then, be the definition of the love of God, *that we keep his commandments*; the question arises, What are his commandments? By careless attention to this language we might be misled. The term *commandments* carries our mind to the ten precepts of the Jewish law—the code of external morals; and we turn away at this explanation of the love of God, imagining it a very simple thing, and satisfied that we are in no danger of failing to answer all its demands. But a little serious consideration of the nature of our religion and our connexion with a future state, must convince us, that this view is deficient. The term *commandment* must by no means be understood to exclude the regulation of the inner man, the control of the thoughts, the purifying of the affections, the watching over the motives, the lifting up of the heart, the feeling, affectionate, devoted heart, to that excellent Being. All this, so far from being excluded, is certainly included, because it is all part of the commandment. Christianity is a religion of the af-

fections; it lays its first restraint on the affections; and it maintains its influence over the whole man by means of the control it exercises there. We, therefore, in vain strive to escape the obligations of an internal, spiritual religion, by taking up this definition of the love of God.

Indeed, it is possible to keep all the commandments of external duty, which some are so ready to suppose the whole love of God, without any reference to his authority, without the design of obeying him, without being influenced in any proper sense by the knowledge of his existence. There are men, from all whose calculations the Deity is excluded; in all whose plans, praise-worthy as they may be, his will is unconsulted. They may not oppose his will, because it coincides with their own inclination; yet they would not hesitate to oppose it, if it thwarted their inclinations. It cannot, therefore, be said that the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. This must be something in the motive, something which influences the will; a principle within, which pervades the affections and is the living spring of all the character.

It is with such a spirit as this, that the love of the world is irreconcilable; by which appears to be intended, in one word, *worldly mindedness*. By the love of God is meant such an affection as makes a reference to him the ruling principle and motive. Consequently by love to the world can be meant, nothing less, than that devotedness to the world, which makes a reference to *it* the ruling principle and motive; that is, nothing less than *worldly mindedness*.

For it cannot be pretended that *every degree* of attachment to the world, is inconsistent with the love of God, or true piety, and therefore to be avoided as sinful. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; and a man may be religiously attached to it, as displaying the glory of his Maker. It has been to him the scene of many blessings; and he may therefore love it as part of his Father's house. In the world, too, are included its inhabitants; our parents, children, relatives, friends; and certainly natural affection is not opposed to piety. It is true, there is some very strong prohibitory language on this point. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." But it is universally allowed that such strong expressions cannot be received literally; but must mean precisely what is meant when our Lord says, "He who loveth father or mother *more than me*, is not worthy of me." The affection is not condemned, but the degree of it; extravagant, unreasonable affection. So where his apostle speaks of "lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God," he im-

plies not the sinfulness of every pleasure, but the wickedness of its excess. So also, the love of the world is condemned, not absolutely, but comparatively; it is condemned because it interferes with the love of God; that is, just so far as it interferes.

The doctrine of indifference to the world, must not be carried to a gloomy and superstitious excess. Certainly neither reason nor religion demand of us to renounce any thing of the world, except its sins; and accordingly our Lord's prayer for his disciples was, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." Indifferent to it we should be, so far as not to place our dependence upon it for happiness, so that we can bear its changes cheerfully, and feel the denial of its pleasures no oppressive evil, and can give up all, and still find that our most valuable possessions are left us. For if mere worldly good is essential to our peace; if our pleasures become dissipation, and unfit us for duty; if our bibles are unopened, our closets unvisited, our hearts unexamined, and our future existence an unwelcome thought; then we love the world too well, and are too much absorbed in things temporal. But we do not love it too well, so long as religious duties are a pleasure, and christian privileges dear to us.

But we are not to be enquiring how near we can go to the borders of the forbidden land, and yet be safe. It is no wisdom to be nourishing the utmost attachment to the world which is allowable. We shall naturally have enough; the real danger is, that we shall have too much; for there is nothing which so easily runs to excess. Our affections will readily enough be set on things below; our duty is to prevent their being absorbed there, and to place them on things above. Let us remember then, that there is an attachment to them wholly incompatible with a religious character. Devotion to the world leaves no room for devotion to God. Worldly mindedness must and will destroy piety. In the nature of things, they are opposed to each other. All sin, of whatever kind it be, has its origin in the undue influence of the world; all temptations spring from the power which present scenes have over the mind; and there is no reason why faith is weak, and piety cold, and virtue irresolute, except this influence of the world. If we were in the midst of things eternal, as we are of things temporal, and they pressed directly upon our senses as these do; then our thoughts would be filled with them, our hearts devoted to them, our lives consecrated to them. Our alienation from them now, is owing to the more importunate presence of sensual things, in many respects more welcome to imperfect beings, which crowd away the objects of faith. This is the

secret of worldly mindedness. Thus it is that piety cannot exist in its company. If you open your bosom to it, it will rush in and fill every corner, and occupy every avenue, so that the love of God can find no place there. The christian cannot look around him without observing melancholy proofs of this, in the lives of men engaged in favourite pursuits, to which religion is an interruption. He cannot look on his own history without recollecting, that, by multiplying his engagements, he has often palsied his religious sensibility, and diminished the influence of his faith. He finds that settled worldly mindedness is the destroyer of religion, and that every degree of worldly mindedness diminishes its power.

How important, therefore, that all our pursuits be mingled with piety, and how wisely has christianity guarded our worldly tendencies, by requiring of us a piety which is not of set times and forms only, but a habit of thought and life, a principle of action. The world is so dangerous, because we are in the midst of it ; it surrounds us ; it presses us on every side ; it urges, entices, and would make us wholly its own. The preventive to this, is constant watchfulness, habitual devotion, and daily recurrence to the great and powerful motives of our faith. When we have our conversation in heaven, the world is not able to lead us astray.

MEEKNESS.

It is a common error to suppose Meekness the gift of nature only ; a grace not to be acquired by effort and discipline. In the estimation of very many, he is the meek man, who is possessed of a quiet good nature which came to him at his birth, and is maintained without any exercise of the will on his part ; who is always still and acquiescing, because he cannot be otherwise ; and is never ruffled by passion, because he has no passions. Now undoubtedly this is a meek man ; and, however the world may ridicule him as pusillanimous, his disposition is, in many respects, a desirable one. But it is certainly a mistake to consider such a one alone as meek, to give such only the praise of this virtue, which stands so high on the list of the gospel ; when it is so entirely constitutional that it costs him nothing to maintain it, and is incapable by any effort of being increased. The consequence of such a definition must be, to make this quality contemptible in the eyes of men, and set the christian temper below the false spirit which the pride of the world cherishes. Certainly, that virtue, whatever it may be, is

most honourable and praiseworthy, which has been acquired by toilsome discipline, and preserved by unremitted exertion. And yet it happens, that the man who has laboured with toil, anxiety, self-denial, to subdue the headstrong passions which nature has given him ; who has wept, and watched, and prayed, that he might get the mastery of his own spirit, and build up the temper of Christ on the ruins of his original violence and pride ; even although he has struggled with success, and has become able to restrain his irritability and impetuosity, and religiously keep silence where he once would have cursed ; this man would yet be refused by many the title of meekness.

But is it reasonable ? Is there any merit greater than that of self-victory ? Is there any nobler triumph of christian principle, than that over the stubbornness of the will, and the ferocity of passion ? Can any one deserve better the name of christian, than he who has fought and conquered to obtain it ? Or is a virtue the less his own, because he is obliged to set a perpetual guard over it ? Perhaps there is sometimes an evident struggle to preserve it ; you discern a little of the workings of his former self ; you see him sometimes struggling to quell the spirit, which attempts again to rise within him in rebellion against the spirit of the gospel. But this marks his *fidelity* ; it is unjust to deny him on account of it, the credit of possessing what he so vigilantly defends. The stream which runs through his grounds would burst its banks and inundate all, if he had not dammed it carefully, and did not watch it continually : and because it occasionally breaks a little through the entrenchment, and you see him obliged to watch and repair, will you deny him the praise you give to his neighbour, whose stream flows quietly, and never was turbulent, and never needed restraint ? Let us be more just to the merits of our fellow-men, and call things by their right names.

To say, indeed, that meekness is merely a constitutional thing, would be to say, that God requires of all, a temper of which he has *created* many incapable. This would be absurd and impious. It may undoubtedly be “ put on,” as the apostle expresses it, by any who will go through the necessary discipline ; and although the credit of possessing it may be denied them by men, yet in the sight of God it will be “ an ornament of great price.”

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

TITLES OF OUR LORD.

THE following list of the titles given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament, is worth examining. It is taken from a note to a sermon of Dr. Lant Carpenter.

I believe the following calculation, made by the assistance of Schmid, will be found sufficiently correct, and may assist in leading the reflecting reader to some conclusions, not unfavourable to the Unitarian scheme. In the New Testament our Lord is called *Jesus* upwards of 600 times, principally in the Gospels; *Jesus Christ* or *Christ Jesus*, about 130 times; *Christ* or *the Christ*, about 270 times, principally in the Epistles; *Lord Jesus Christ*, or *Lord Jesus*, or *Jesus Christ our Lord*, &c. upwards of 100 times, but never in the Gospels; *Son of God*, about 20 times; *the Son of God*, about 30 times; *Son* (implying the same thing,) about 40 times; *the Son of Man*, 80 times; *Son of David*, 14 times; *Beloved Son*, 8 times; *Only begotten*, 5 times; *First begotten*, 5 times; *Saviour*, 17 times; *Mediator*, 4 times; *Redeemer*, not once; *Word*, or *Word of God*, 7 times; *God*, or *a God*, once, (John i. 1. see Improved Version and compare John x. 34, 35; on this point however, there is considerable diversity of opinion;*) *the Image of God* (compare 1. Cor. xi. 7.), twice; *the Brightness of God's Glory and express Image of his Person*, (more correctly, *a Ray of his Glory and an Impression of his Perfections*), once; *Lord of all* (i. e. of Jews and Gentiles Acts x. 36,) once; *Lord of the dead and of the living*, once; *Lord of the sabbath*, once; *Lord of Glory*, twice; *Alpha and Omega*, once, (see Griesbach on Rev. i. 11;) *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, twice; *Prince of Life*, *Prince*, *Captain of Salvation*, *Author and Finisher of our Faith*, once each, (the original translated *Prince*, *Captain*, *Author*, signifies a *Leader* or *Chief*;) *the Life* and *the Light*, several times each; *Kurios* (generally translated *Lord* in the Public Version) is applied to Jesus in so many instances, and with so much diversity of signification, that it is almost impracticable to give any general statement respecting it. If any suppose, that since this word is em-

* For a more complete statement on this point, see note to Mr. Channing's Sermon.

ployed in the Septuagint and the New Testament for the Hebrew name Jehovah, therefore Jesus Christ is Jehovah, let them look into Schmid under the word, and examine the passages in which it is employed. When applied to Jesus it may be rendered Lord, Master, Sir, according to the connexion.—I am not certain that my enumeration is complete ; if not, however, it is not through intention.

EICHHORN'S ODE TO THE PROPHETS.

[*The following lines are a translation of a copy of Verses, prefixed by Professor Eichhorn to his recent work on the Hebrew Prophets. We offer them to our readers merely as a specimen of the poetical talents of this celebrated man, and of his manner of thinking on a most important subject.*]

O ! trusted of th' Omnipotent, I greet you !
 Rest ye at last within your grove of palms ?
 A rest, which Horeb, Zion, Carmel gave not ?
 How do your early times stand debtors to you !
 For laws, religion, morals, sacred hopes,—
 The weal of states, the precepts of the wise :—
 They flowed like blessed fountains from your lips.
 For yours were noble spirits, that soared up
 Beyond the sluggish present, and the dreams
 Of a subjected and a doting people ;
 Above each common joy, each fond illusion ;
 And back and forward saw the light of ages.
 Far onward, far behind, that light was beaming ;
 And your souls felt it like the fire of heaven.
 Long burned the flame in still obscurity,
 Then shone, to light the course of days yet distant.

In holy shades of solitude, you listened
 In rapt obedience to the unearthly voice,
 That at the midnight or the dawning hour
 Stole o'er the heart, and touch'd its finest chords.
 Now softly fell the tones like showers in spring ;
 Now swept like tempests o'er a slumbering world,
 As if the thousand voices of the past,
 And of all after time, were mingling there.

Ye true and pure of soul, again I greet you ;
 Ye harp-strings in the hands of Deity ;
 Interpreters of heaven ; life of the laws ;
 And heralds of events, that yet appeared not :
 O thou of Sinai, who, midst cloud and storm,

Leaving the world and thy dark times beneath thee,
 Didst look upon that splendour, which now spreads
 Its glories round the earth; and on the form
 Of wisdom, deck'd with pomp and bright with wonders!
 Thou, soul of flame, which snatch'd from heaven its fires,
 And from the realm of shades the widow's son!
 Thou, who didst see Jehovah on his throne,
 With all the glittering train that fill'd his temple!
 Ye mournful ones, who sung but to lament,
 And pour'd in tears your gentle hearts away!
 And ye, who, in the evening of the prophets,
 Saw through the twilight dusky forms advance!
 Ye all, who now to happier regions risen,
 Your labours ceased, and every conflict ended,
 Rove through your grove of palms, and taste of rest;
 A rest, which Horeb, Zion, Carmel gave not!

What do I see? who join themselves to these
 So brotherly? The wise of other nations?
 Yes, the select of God through all the world;
 The noble company of Druid sages;
 Pythagoras, and Orpheus, and Plato:
 All, who were e'er the fathers of the people,
 And guardians of the laws; who faithfully
 Bow'd a pure ear to catch the voice of heaven,
 Gave a pure heart to feel its inspiration.

REVIEW.

*Memoirs of the late Mrs. Mary Cooper of London; extract-
 ed from her Diary and Epistolary Correspondence. By*
 ADAM CLARKE, LL. D. Fourth Edition. London, 1818.
 12mo. pp. 260.

To the Christian Philanthropist, who has so much occasion to
 lament the divisions which have been multiplied among the
 disciples of the same Lord and Master, and who has observed
 with grief the fierce dissensions and bitter controversies, which
 have resulted from differences of theological opinion, and which
 have so much retarded the proper influence of Christianity,
 it is consoling to perceive, that these have not been the only
 effects of the religion of love; but that, under all its various
 forms and different disguises, it has never ceased to be effec-
 tual in purifying the corrupt, strengthening the weak, and guid-

ing the willing in the way of life. There is so much that is clearly and entirely practical in what we are taught in the gospel, that, however some may have misstated and exaggerated the relative importance of certain speculative opinions, no man who pretends to the name of Christian, could fail to inculcate the necessity of a virtuous and holy life. These instructions are not lost amid the tumults of controversy, for they are enforced and brought home to men's bosoms, by the powerful though secret admonitions of natural conscience. Christians therefore, of all denominations, however widely they may differ in opinion, or however directly the religious tenets of some may appear opposite in their natural tendency to practical excellence, have generally been sufficiently instructed in that which constitutes the great requisite to happiness both here and hereafter. And we believe, and we rejoice to believe, that "in every nation, and in every sect, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;" that he who has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick, and comforted the prisoner, will inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world; that no want of faith in doubtful dogmas will prevent the fulfilment of the promise, that "the pure in heart shall see God;" and that no want of confidence in their acceptance, will exclude the poor in spirit from the kingdom of heaven.

Many are prevented from taking this cheering view of the subject, by that pride of opinion and sectarian zeal, which would confine the path to heaven within such narrow limits, that none can be safe but those who follow their footsteps; while others looking back upon the history of Christianity, and expecting to find peace on earth and good will towards men, are shocked by the fierceness of the angry disputant, the violence of the bigot, and the fury of the persecutor. They have seen the field overrun with rank and noxious weeds, and have concluded in despair, that the thorns have sprung up and choked the good seed. But the history of religious controversy is not the history of religion. The fruits of the spirit are to be sought, not principally in those actions which become subjects of history, but in the narrower sphere of private life. There we may often find christian charity, humility, and piety, appearing in their most attractive forms. There, under the shade of many conflicting opinions and opposing doctrines, we may often discover much that should awaken our gratitude to God, and our benevolence to man. We may be greatly assisted in our charitable inquiries into the religious and moral attainments of those from whom we differ in opinion, by memoirs of sincere and devout Christians, like those of which we are about to speak.

In the Memoirs of Mrs. Cooper, we have seen little of the peculiarities of a sectarian, and have been gratified with much that indicates a deep feeling of piety, and an ardent love of all real excellence. She received her early religious education from worthy and pious parents, in the communion of the church of England. It was perhaps a little injudiciously severe, for at the age of sixteen, when she first left her home on a visit, she sought with avidity all the fashionable amusements and pleasures which were within her reach. She was soon, however, convinced that dissipation and frivolity are not happiness; and upon her return to her family, her attention was more deeply awakened than it had ever previously been, to serious subjects. It was not long after this time that she commenced keeping a diary; a practice from which, when discreetly conducted, we think some important benefits may be derived. It is a valuable aid to the memory, and enables us to compare more fairly our past and present character, to determine what we have already accomplished, and what yet remains for us to do, in the pursuit of virtue, and the contest with sin. But in so far as a diary relates to the state of our own minds and hearts, in order to render it of any value, indeed to prevent it from becoming a snare to our virtue, it must not only be kept from the eyes of others, but must be designed solely and entirely for our own improvement. We must watch against allowing ourselves to have any further view, than seriously and religiously to correct what is wrong, and to improve what is right, in our own breasts. Few things can be more pernicious to the writers, and few certainly more offensive to a reader of sincere piety, than those diaries which are sometimes sent into the world, bearing the marks of having been originally intended, with an ill directed benevolence, for the edification of the christian world in general. The existence of that of Mrs. Cooper was unknown even to her husband, until after her decease.

The zeal and industry manifested by this worthy woman in the cultivation of her understanding, well deserves imitation. She regularly pursued the study of some branch of the History of Nature, or the History of man, and derived from it those benefits which might be anticipated. She became more alive to the beauties of creation, more thoroughly and deeply convinced of the perfections of its Almighty author, and more sensible of the necessity of Divine assistance and direction to the imperfect reason of man. It is a vulgar error, not yet entirely exploded, that knowledge and piety are in some degree at variance; we were therefore pleased to see the following remarks from the pen of one whose piety is unquestionable, and whose character will give weight to her opinions in the estima-

tion of those to whom her suggestions are calculated to be useful.

“The cultivation of my understanding has long been my aim and desire ; and the time usually devoted by those of my own age and sex, to pleasure and frivolity, has been spent in more rational pursuits. The restraints of education were, in the first instance, *imposed* upon me : this yoke I impatiently bore ; but when, by the mercy of God, I was made *sensible* of the vanity of worldly pursuits, and their dangerous tendency ; and, above all, was convinced that I had an immortal soul within me, that an omnipresent Deity was the witness of my actions, the Searcher of my heart and intentions ; I was, I trust, made desirous of choosing God for my portion. Man must have recreations, resources, pleasures ; the improvement of the mind, of the reasoning faculties, appears the noblest and most rational of indulgencies. Knowledge has been so captivating to my imagination, that I have with eagerness snatched every spare moment for its attainment. While endeavouring to scan the great arcana of nature ; to trace the finger of the Deity in every production ; to mark His obvious *designs* in every creature of His hand ; with what a double relish have I viewed the works of the great Creator ; how has my heart glowed with joy in exploring these fields of novelty and information ; nothing so much tends to exalt our ideas of God ; nothing is so calculated to produce humility ; nature is open for our perusal, and, by its beauties, alluring to the observer. How powerfully does the immensity of the great Creator strike the soul, when contemplating the starry hosts ; when, wrapt in astonishment, the spirit rises to the stars, and views them as the creation of its Father’s hand ! O ! endearing title ; though He dwells in the highest heavens, He has also His residence in the humble and contrite heart ; which is as much the object of His care as if it alone existed.

“When dissolving nature shall proclaim that the hour of retribution is at hand ; when the rocks and mountains shall prove a vain defence against the piercing eye of the avenging Deity, O that I may hail the moment as the time of my complete happiness, when soul and body, once more united, shall rise to eternal happiness ! Why do I ever linger in pursuit of such a prize ? It is my desire to have a greater acquaintance with God and His works, and more humbling views of myself. I wish to strive against every appearance of *vanity, conceit, and self-sufficiency*. Knowledge, without wisdom, puffeth up : I would, in this respect, *watch my heart*.” p. 23—25.

In the year 1809, Mrs. Cooper, then Miss Hanson, became acquainted with some of the Wesleyan, or Arminian Methodists, who reckon among their number some distinguished names, such for instance as that of Dr. Clarke, the editor of the little work before us. She was charmed with their zeal, the strictness of their lives, and what she considered their scriptural views of religion, and soon enrolled herself as one of that denomination. From this period, she continued with fresh vigour, her pursuit of the christian acquisitions of holiness and piety. Her views and feelings were in many respects different from our own ; but we have little to object to that religion, of which the direct and natural tendency is exhibited in the improvement of the heart and life, and are not disposed to quarrel with opinions which do not create exclusive pretensions, nor

uncharitable and censorious dispositions towards those who consider them as erroneous. We make the following extracts from her diary and letters, that we may give the reader an idea at once of the manner in which she aimed at self-improvement, of the practical nature of her ardent piety, and of her liberal feelings and principles with respect to sincere Christians of other denominations.

"I feel daily more and more the need of watchfulness and the influence of the Spirit to keep alive my good desires and resolutions; for I know my heart is deceitful, and the world alluring.—Experience has shewn me, that one great cause of religious declension is a carelessness in devotion, and neglect of reading the Scriptures; hence I would have *set* seasons for both, and conscientiously observe them. * * * The worldly are very *eager* in the pursuit of their pleasures, pleasures which produce satiety—shall I then, who am a probationer for heavenly pleasures, be *slow* in seeking them—and shall I suffer every little trifle to rob me of them? O forbid it! It is not an earthly shadow, but an eternal substance, I seek after. It demands my constant attention, my most fervent devotions."

"Let not the universal carelessness which prevails about unseen things, *deter* me. Our Lord foretold this; he says, the gate is straight, and but few *enter* it; but He also forewarns me of that place where the worm never dies.

"I do record it, on this anniversary of my birth, that I desire, more devotedly than I ever have done, to give myself up, all I have and am, to my God; to press forward in the Divine life, and to aim at that perfection which is the glory and happiness of the saints. These are my birth-day hopes and resolutions; and my handwriting will witness against me if I swerve from these paths of religion and peace.

"I hope I have gained something, from observation, the past year. I live but to little purpose if experience do not teach me; and if the commission of error in one instance do not deter me from the same, when a similar occasion offers."

"May the succeeding year, if I live to complete it, find me more decidedly devoted to God; less earthly-minded, and abounding more in good works. *Mark this*, religion is a progressive work, no standing still; either on the *advance* or on the *decline*—if it dwells in the soul, it will transform the nature, subdue evil, and be gradually assimilating it to the Divine Image.

"All on earth must say to corruption, Thou art my mother, and to the worm, Thou art my sister. Such is our destiny by nature. But thou, my soul, hast higher hopes, and sublimer expectations: thy immortal interests are, through grace, thy chief concern: thou hast been taught by the word of God, that though the outward tabernacle be dissolved, thou hast a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Joyful prospect! Live but in the preparation for this, and death will lose its sting, the grave its terrors, and the world its charms. Well then, be not cast down; all on earth is changeable: there is no rest here: thou hast proved its insufficiency to impart one moment's real solid satisfaction. But God is unchangeable; His arms of mercy are ever open to receive those who seek Him; His promises are as eternal as His nature. The only wisdom is to seek God, and to prepare to meet Him. Remember, O my soul, that every day thou art called upon to remember thy God, to seek His favour, and to *begin* here that employ which is the bliss of angels and glorified spirits. Religion, if it exists in the soul, must subdue sin; it must be manifested in every action of the life; tempers must be sanctified, holy

dispositions implanted. These are the evidences of a state of grace; it is this which makes the soul easy under all the afflictions of life. This is the blessed union which subsists between Christ and His people; these are the evidences of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which can make the Christian joyous, happy, and even triumphant, in the anticipation of death."

"The inestimable blessing of Divine illumination, the gift of the Holy Spirit, is only promised to those that seek it. Perseverance is needful; and when the infinite value of this gift is considered, surely the soul should possess itself with patience and diligent seeking till the Divine breathing be communicated. I have always found the blessings of grace dispensed to me in proportion to my diligence in seeking them. Much profit I have found by *stated seasons* of devotion, and devotional reading. This is, indeed, great encouragement for me most diligently and importunately to seek that sense of God's pardoning mercy which shall diffuse the peace which passeth understanding.

"My confidence in God is greatly strengthened. The world has lost all its charms for me; and 'the pearl of great price' is what I most desire to possess:—to keep my heart with all diligence, to watch the first risings of sin, and to fear the quenching of the Holy Spirit—this be now my care and business. Religion demands my time, my talents, and my affections; and I bless God I have no desire to make any reserve. I desire to be wholly the Lord's; and to prove it by holiness in all manner of conversation. I must indeed daily pray and strive against pride, and warmth of temper: the first manifests itself when my favourite opinions are opposed. Here, indeed, a strict watch is necessary. I must avoid controversy in religion; and remember that acrimony and taking offence are great proofs that piety has not its due influence on the heart.

"While we continue in the grace of God freely imparted, watching and praying, loving God with all our hearts, none shall pluck us out of the Redeemer's hands; nothing shall separate us from His love. But if we grow careless, neglectful of prayer and reading the word of God; count His service weariness, and hold communion with the world instead of the Creator, can you think such persons meet for the kingdom of heaven! These instances, my dearest friend, are not uncommon. I do believe that if you and I have once received the grace of God, it is our own fault, and chargeable alone upon ourselves, that we ever lose it. God deals with us as with reasonable creatures; and certain conditions are prescribed to us. We are to ask, seek, and knock for the Holy Spirit: having received it, we are to *watch* and pray, deny ourselves, abstain from all appearance of evil: the power is from above, and through Christ we can do all these things.

"Do not let these sentiments and enjoyments, if contrary to your own, diminish the love you have borne me; mine for you glows with the same fervour; and I shall have just reason to reproach myself, if I suffer the entrance of indifference. *All* will meet in heaven who love God, by whatever name they are called: the more we get of this Divine principle, the more we shall love each other."

These are feelings which we sincerely wish were more generally prevalent. They are the genuine results of real piety, the best demonstrations of christian charity. The errors of Mrs. Cooper were those of the understanding, and not of the heart; and while we would caution others against them, we would still more eagerly lift up a warning voice against that uncharitable-

ness, which would neglect or despise what is excellent, because united with something that is weak or mistaken.

We regret that the editor has not given us a more particular account of her social life, as we conceive that the example of a Christian who so well understood the nature of holiness, and the means of improvement in all virtue, would have been particularly useful; we, however, cordially agree with him in the opinion, that "it may be safely presumed, that no unprejudiced person can peruse this little volume, without having his heart religiously affected, and his mind considerably improved."

ARTICLE XI.

God not the Author of Sin. A Discourse delivered before the Second Congregational Church and Society in Marblehead, June 20, 1819. By JOHN BARTLETT, Pastor of said Church.

CERTAIN theological opinions are still popular among us, which seem, at least, to represent God as the author of sin in a sense incompatible with his justice, goodness and mercy. It is the object of this discourse to vindicate the divine character from any such imputation; and to shew that those theological opinions in which any such imputation is expressed or implied are and must be irrational, unscriptural, and therefore false. The passage of scripture which Mr. Bartlett has selected for his text, is from Isaiah v. 4. "*What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?*" After a short and pertinent introduction he proceeds.

"The passage we have selected we think authorises the following general position, and the inference which is drawn from it, viz.

"I. That God has done every thing which an infinitely wise, holy, just and good Being could do, consistently with his moral perfections and with our freedom of agency, to prevent our sin and misery, and to make us holy and happy. Therefore,

"II. Any sentiment which either directly or by implication, makes our sins to appear necessary as the effect of divine appointment; or inevitable as the consequence of any constituted inability, or through the want of sufficient means to prevent them, cannot be correct and is not taught in the Bible." p. 4.

His main position he afterwards goes on to establish, in a style of great perspicuity and directness,

“ by arguments drawn from the nature of God, which is essentially opposed to sin; from the nature which he has given to men, by which they are made capable of moral excellence, and furnished with a defence against sin; from the laws which he hath prescribed to us, inculcating holiness and prohibiting sin, and enforced by the most solemn sanctions; from the connexion which he has established between sin and misery even in this world; from the wonderful fact that he has sent his only begotten and dearly beloved Son into the world on purpose to redeem men from sin; and bestowed his Holy Spirit, all whose operations oppose sin, and whose office is to purify the soul.

“ To these arguments might be added others, drawn from the declarations of God's word, and from the methods of his providential government of the world; but what has already been offered we think sufficient to convince any reasonable man, whose mind is not warped by system nor fettered by prejudice, that God cannot be the author of sin; but has done and is doing every thing which a wise, holy, just and good Being can consistently do to prevent it.” p. 9.

Why then has he not actually prevented it? If God could prevent sin, but would not, where is his goodness? and if he would prevent sin, but could not, where is his power? These difficulties the writer of this discourse has not thought proper to attempt to solve. To account for the origin and existence of sin in God's moral creation he seems to suppose impossible, and assigns this as a reason for not pursuing the inquiry any further. His object is not to establish any theory of his own on this dark subject; but to refute one already established. We apprehend, however, that he has not thought sufficiently on the extreme difficulty, may we not say the impossibility of persuading men to give up any theory which they have for a long time regarded as true, unless another theory is offered them in its room equally plausible and not liable to the same objections. Men like to *account for things*; they do not care so much upon what system, but they will have *some* system. What they account for in one way to-day, you may persuade them to account for in a better way to-morrow; but you will not succeed in persuading them that it cannot be accounted for at all. Men love to have a theory for every thing, though, as we before remarked, they do not care much what it is, if it do but answer its purpose. The only way therefore, in which we can hope to dislodge an erroneous theory from their minds, is to supplant it with the true one, which may fill the place, or at least answer for the absence of the one that is put away.

Since then the difficulties under consideration are such as will be likely to influence our views of God's character and providence, accordingly as we account for them; and since they are difficulties on which men will speculate, notwithstanding whatever may be said to dissuade them from doing it; we think it adviseable to go a little deeper into the subject, and

make a few suggestions that may lead them to conclusions, not free perhaps from all objections and cavils, but liable certainly to fewer than those which they now may hold. The investigation we well know is, above all others, intricate and perplexing—but since men will plunge into the labyrinth, there is so much the more reason that some clue should be given to guide them through its mazy windings. The dryness of the subject shall not drive us from our purpose, though it may our readers; not that we intend to give the subject a full discussion, but only to offer a very few remarks illustrative of those commanding points on which, as we believe, the whole controversy turns.

Dr. Hartley has observed with his accustomed sagacity, that in regard to the introduction of sin into God's world, most of the confusion and inconsistency in the minds and writings of men, has arisen from their mixing together the popular language with philosophical language. It must be a fact familiar to all acquainted with metaphysics, that there are two methods of speaking upon a variety of subjects—the one popular—the other philosophical—the former representing things as they appear to be; and the latter as they really are. Thus, in popular language, we say there is fragrance in the rose, flavour in the peach, and colour in the plum: and this, considered as popular language, is true—true in the sense in which it is understood—true enough to answer all the purposes of common conversation. But considered as philosophical language, it is not true; for fragrance, flavour, and colour are not and cannot be qualities of external bodies—but only sensations of the mind. We see therefore that the popular mode of speaking and the philosophical are often at variance. We may use either, and be clear, and consistent, and sufficiently accurate so long as we keep it distinct from the other: but if we mix and confound them together, we shall be led to endless confusion and paradox. It is from this abuse of language that we often hear such silly paradoxes as the following, gravely announced by men who have just gotten a smattering of modern philosophy. "There is no more heat in fire than in ice." Heat in popular language we use to signify not only the sensation of heat in the mind, but also the quality in the external body that produces that sensation. Understanding, therefore, this term, in the expression quoted, in a popular sense, in which it ought to be understood from its connexion—the assertion is not true. But limiting the term heat to its philosophical acceptance—by which it is made to signify only the sensation of heat in the mind—there to be sure it is true. Thus it is that by mixing and confounding popular language with philosophical, we can make

numberless imaginary paradoxes, which can be so explained as to appear true, but which, by being so explained, become at the same time idle and unmeaning.

We apprehend that most of the difficulties and metaphysical abstrusities that have embarrassed our speculations on the origin of moral evil, have arisen from our allowing ourselves to be cheated and fooled by paradoxes, like the one we have just mentioned. When men directly affirm that God is the author of sin, or, *which is the same thing*—when they maintain doctrines that either amount to or imply the affirmation that God is the author of sin; they give to the terms used a meaning very different from their popular acceptation. Though therefore, they may be able to support and vindicate their doctrines in the sense in which they say they mean them to be understood—they by no means support and vindicate them in the sense in which they would probably be, and are, in fact, generally understood. They do not prove by all their long and laboured argumentation any thing more, than what a man of plain good sense would readily concede to them without any argumentation at all. They prove that what they *mean* by their doctrines is true, by proving that they do not mean any thing by them; that is, any thing different from what others believe, who would express their faith in very different language. Many of their doctrines we conceive to be like the paradoxes we have alluded to above, a mere play upon words. No one we should think could fail of being struck with the correctness of this remark, in reading the works of that very acute and ingenious metaphysician, President Edwards.

Without doing any great violence to language, no doubt there *is a sense* in which God may be said to be the author of all our actions. But it is not the popular sense, the common sense, the sense in which such an assertion would be understood by the great mass of the people. In popular language we say that man is the author of his own actions, the agent of his own work. Indeed all human language is founded on this assumption. Who does not say, man runs, man fights, man steals? And we should hardly be able to treat one with a due degree of seriousness, who should gravely tell us that we are all wrong in this; that we must alter our phraseology, and say, God runs, God fights, God steals. In fact if we should make any such alteration, we should in a degree do violence to the nature and defeat the purposes of language. Language is in itself essentially popular, and designed for popular use. Should we therefore endeavour to change its nature and design, we might perhaps be able to puzzle, and unsettle, and confound men's minds, but we should not be able to do any thing more.

We should not be able to elucidate what is dark, or correct what may be erroneous in their understandings.—The fact is, when we say that man is the author of his own actions, we do not mean, and we are not understood as meaning any thing but what is strictly and philosophically true. When the plain country man affirms, and persists in affirming, that there is heat in fire, it is certain, as Dr. Reid has abundantly shewn, that he does not mean that there is any thing like the *sensation* of heat in the fire; but only that there is *something* in fire which warms those who approach it; and the philosopher cannot deny this. So also when we say that man is the author of his own actions, we have nothing to do with any metaphysical theory on the subject of his volitions, but we merely mean, and we are understood as merely meaning, that there is something in man on account of which he is to be considered the immediate author of such and such actions. Will the philosopher deny this? Now if you go to the plain man and contradict him—telling him that there is no heat in fire—he will of course understand you as contradicting what he *means*; that is, he will understand you as saying, that there is no quality belonging to the fire which causes in our minds the sensation of heat; so that instead of correcting an error in him, you will, though perhaps unintentionally, lead him into an error. Just so it will be if you represent men as not being the authors of their own actions. So far as they may be able to understand you at all, they will misunderstand you. You will not correct any error in them; for on your own principles they are not in any error, though they use directly contrary language. All you will do will be to introduce infinite perplexity and confusion into their thoughts on human agency.

What we have said against the propriety of calling God the author of human actions in general, applies with tenfold force against the propriety of calling him the author of our sins; and therefore against the propriety of *using that sort of language* which would seem to *imply* that he is the author of our sins; for it is obvious that there is no difference between using that language which inevitably implies it, and openly and directly calling him so. Sin, in popular language, is understood to signify a wrong use of our voluntary powers. To say therefore that God is the author of sin, is to say that he is the author of the wrong use of our *voluntary* powers—which is plainly a solecism. Sin is sin no otherwise, than as it is a wrong use of powers, understood to be strictly voluntary. If our active powers are not strictly and philosophically speaking voluntary, then, strictly and philosophically speaking, there is no such thing as sin. So far as God is the author of our sins, they are not

sins. Evils, it is true, they may be; but they cannot be called sins. If, in philosophical language we may call God the author of moral evil, then, in order to be consistent, we must continue to use the same philosophical language, and call moral evil, not sin, but only a particular modification of natural evil. It will not do for us in the first place to speak of moral evil in philosophical language, as originating in God, and then in the same connexion to speak of it in popular language, as originating in man. We may use either language alone, and it will answer well enough; but we must not use them promiscuously; for, we repeat it, if we do, we shall certainly confuse ourselves, and confound others.

We have said more on this point than we thought would be necessary when we began. But we shall not have lost our labour if we have led any of our readers to reflect, first, that in speculating on human merit and demerit, we use two methods of speaking—two languages; in which the very same terms are interpreted respectively by different laws and received in different acceptations; so that a proposition may at the same time be understood as true either affirmatively or negatively, accordingly as it is taken in a popular or philosophical sense. Secondly, that although perhaps no great evil will result from using either mode of speaking, if it be carefully kept distinct from the other, yet if we confound them together, we shall introduce into our thoughts and reasonings paradoxes and self-contradictions without number. And thirdly, that as all language seems in its nature, structure and design, to be entirely popular, we have no right to use it in any other but the popular acceptance, without endeavouring, and being certain that we succeed in our endeavours, to prevent those whom we address from misconstruing on that account what we advance; that is, the philosopher must not only be sure that there is a sense in which his expressions are true, but he must also be certain they will be received in that sense by the people whose language he uses, and whom he addresses.

Now, in applying these principles to the subject in debate, we are by no means unwilling to admit, that there is a sense in which God may be said to be the author of moral evil; we are not unwilling to allow that there is a sense in which it may be said, that God foresees, occasions, and if you please did predestinate, its existence. Nay, more; we will suppose there is a sense in which it may be said God foreknows, expects, and, if you please, makes, such and such particular persons to be vessels of dishonour, children of wrath, workers of iniquity. Still further: so little are we disposed to be quarrelsome, we will

take it for granted that it is only in this sense that those who advocate the doctrines of predestination and election, mean to understand themselves and be understood by others. After making all these concessions, it may be thought that we have brought the controversy to an end by giving it up. Far otherwise. We have still serious, and, as we believe, solid grounds of objection against those who advocate the Calvinistic doctrines of predestination and election. These shall be stated in the sequel; but we must first explain in what sense it is, that God may in truth be said to permit, occasion, or, if you please, predestinate, ordain, or decree the existence of moral evil in general, or in particular instances.

The evil that there is in the world is of three kinds; metaphysical, natural, and moral. *Metaphysical evil* is the evil of defect or imperfection in the nature, adaptation, or contrivance of things. *Natural evil* is that which results from the operation of *unintentional* agents. And *Moral evil* is that which results from the operation of *intentional* agents.

Now we say that all natural and moral evil flows from metaphysical evil—or, in other words, that all evil of every kind either consists in, or can be traced to defect or imperfection in the nature, adaptation, or contrivance of things. That all natural evil may be traced not to design, but to imperfection—not to contrivance, but to defect of contrivance, has been satisfactorily shewn by the inimitable Paley. Much as disorder and suffering of every sort abound in the world, they never appear to exist in and for themselves. There has not been and it is therefore presumed there cannot be found, in the whole compass of nature, any one thing the *purpose* of which is to mar the beauty or disturb the harmony of creation. True it is, there are many things that are continually producing evil; but this never appears to have been the design or end of their being. That in every case appears to be the production of good; and the only reason why they do not produce always good, but sometimes evil, is some imperfection in themselves or their adaptation. It is as if an ingenious man should frame a complicated machine, but should not frame it so exactly but that it would still be liable to some disorders in its operation. In this case it is plain that these disorders are not the effect of design in the contriver of the machine—nor the end of any particular part of it; but they result from the imperfection of the whole. So it is with natural evil in the world.

And so also it is with moral evil. It is not necessary for us to enlarge upon the imperfections of our moral faculties and capacities. Our weakness and ignorance are proverbial; and in childhood, when our habits and propensities are most rapidly

forming, this weakness and ignorance are most remarkable. No species—no, not an instance of moral evil can be named, which cannot be traced to some perversion or misapplication of the principles of our nature. As in the natural world, nothing exists, the *purpose* and *end* of which appear to have been to produce suffering and disorder; so also in the moral world, nothing can be found, the purpose and end of which appear to have been to introduce sin. Sin has found its way into the world not through design, but through imperfection—not through contrivance, but through defect of contrivance. If any one will take the trouble to analyze the passions and affections of man, he will find that not one of them, in its natural state, and in and of its own nature, is the source of moral evil. It is only by their being perverted and misapplied that the agency of our passions and affections becomes pernicious. This has been proved and illustrated in a thousand ways by Dr. Cogan in his Treatise on the passions; and to that work we must refer our readers, having no time to dwell on the subject. We can only remark, that there is no more reason to consider the guilt of our souls the result of contrivance and design in our moral constitution, than there is to consider the pain and sickness of our bodies the result of contrivance and design in our physical constitution. Guilty we know we are; but our guilt in every instance originates in our abusing and perverting powers and faculties in themselves good, and which would have produced good had they not been thus abused and perverted. Now to say, that the evil, which springs from the misapplication of our moral powers, was designed in the gift and constitution of those moral powers, is absurd. It is the same thing with saying, that they were designed to be misapplied; which is a solecism in language. Every thing that is made is of course designed to some certain end by its maker. If it be applied to answer another end, the evil which results from this misapplication, though it may be and must be referred to some imperfection either in the thing itself, or its adaptation, cannot in any sense be traced to design in its maker—to design in any thing. It results not from design, but from imperfection—from metaphysical evil.

All evil therefore, whether moral or natural, results from metaphysical evil. Whence then comes metaphysical evil? As all moral and natural originate in metaphysical evil, we may say that the cause of metaphysical evil is the cause of all evil. If therefore, we can account for the existence of that, we at the same time account for the introduction and existence of all evil. Whence then does metaphysical evil arise? Who is

its author? Is it God? Is God the author of the imperfection and defect there is in the natural and moral worlds?

We might answer, No: God is not the author of metaphysical evil, for it has no author. Borrowing our language from Scott's Christian Life, we might say,—“God is the cause of perfection only, but not of defect, which, so far forth as it is *natural* to created beings, hath no cause at all, but is merely a negation or non-entity. For every created being was a negation or non-entity before ever it had a positive being, and it had only so much of its primitive negation *taken away* from it as it had positive being conferred upon it; and therefore, so far forth as *it is*, its being is to be attributed to the sovereign cause that produced it; but so far as it is *not*, its not being is to be attributed to the original non-entity out of which it was produced. As for instance, if I give a poor man a hundred pounds, that he is worth *so much* money is wholly owing to me; but that he is not worth a hundred *more*, is owing only to his own poverty; and just so, that I have such and such *perfections* of being, is wholly owing to God who produced me out of nothing; but that I have such and such *defects* of being, is only owing to that non-entity out of which he produced me.”

This does not however perfectly satisfy us. There are certain specific defects and imperfections in this system of things, which we hardly think accounted for by calling them mere non-entities. They are defects and imperfections too, from which flow a multitude of evils, both natural and moral, of far too serious an importance to have *nothing* for their author. They seem essentially to belong to this world, constituted as it now is, and to grow out of its very constitution. The author of this system of things, which we call the world, may be said therefore in one sense to be the author of these imperfections; for if he had not made the world at all, or had not made it just as he has, they would not have existed. In a sense, therefore, he may be called the author of metaphysical evil; and, by consequence, the author of all evil. He does not cause it directly; neither does he do any thing that indirectly *causes* it—but he *occasions* it. It does not arise from what he has done, but from what he has not done. The world does not exist on account of the evil, but the evil exists on account of the world. God is the author of evil only inasmuch as he does not prevent it. This distinction is to be carefully noticed and recollected; for though there is a *sense* in which God is the author of evil, yet it is by no means the *same* sense in which he is the author of good. The good there is in the world results from his having done *so much*, and the

evil from his not having done *more*. Good is the purpose of God *in and for itself*—but in and for itself Evil is not the purpose of God, and only exists as it is essentially connected with the whole scheme of his creation. The good springs from design; the evil is only incidental, not the object of express design, but growing out of the execution of other designs, all of which are good.

After all, however, it may be asked, what is the difference between directly causing or creating evil by design, and merely occasioning it? Does it not amount to the same thing, since in either case evil is originated?—Certainly in popular language, and as we speak in human affairs, there is a vast difference between causing or creating evil by design, and only occasioning it without design—so far at least as it relates to the moral character of the agent. When we induce evil by design, we are held answerable for the evil; but when without designing it, then our moral characters are not thought to be implicated. Now if we apply this principle to God, and speak of him as we do of men, *anthropomorphitically*, as it is called, we do not see but that the distinction will still hold good with regard to him. It is true, God *foresees* not only all the good he will create by design, but also all the evil that will accompany that design though not part of it. In this respect he differs from us; but we do not perceive that this affects in the slightest degree the distinction in question; for the morality of any agent, whether God or man, is not at all determined by his foreseeing or his not foreseeing the consequences of his conduct, but by his *intentions* in pursuing it. As, therefore, we have shewn that evil in the world is not the object of design on the part of the Creator; the divine character for justice and goodness we do not conceive to be at all implicated in its origin; nor do we think its existence furnishes any argument for impeaching divine providence.

Yet may it not still be asked, Why has God left his work so imperfect—why has he permitted metaphysical evil to remain in his creation—why has he not supplied every defect and corrected every imperfection? We answer, he could not. When God gave existence to beings out of himself, it was necessary to make them *limited* in a greater or less degree, or else he must have multiplied himself; which of course was impossible. Now all limitation implies imperfection or defect; and consequently, imperfection or defect in God's creation, that is, metaphysical evil, exists *from necessity*—from a necessity independent of God himself, and in which therefore his character is not concerned.

But it may be said, although metaphysical evil could not be prevented, yet might not its *consequences*—natural and moral evil—have been avoided by general or constant interpositions of providence? And it may be urged in this connexion, that the morality of an agent is often as much affected by what he does or does not *prevent*, as by what he does or does not produce.—In answer to the question which we have supposed to be put to us, we observe, that it is the same thing with asking in other words, could not God make a world different from and better than the world he has made? for allowing the evil of imperfection to continue, it is plain its natural consequences could not be avoided, without disturbing and destroying those laws and connexions which exist among things, and which make this world *what it is*. If then it is asked, whether God could not have made a different and a better world; we reply; suppose that he could; what then? It is to be recollected that though there is evil and much evil in this world, yet good upon the whole predominates over it—and that though we are subject to more or less of misery in our existence, yet no one is justified upon the whole in despising his existence. These positions we take; we presume they will not be disputed; at least we are ready to defend them. Granting therefore that God could have created another and a better world than this—it does not by any means prove it inconsistent with his supposed perfections to create *this* world, since this world is upon the whole good. To say otherwise would be to go upon the presumption, that it is inconsistent with the perfections of God to do any good at all, unless he does the *best* in every particular instance—the best both in degree and in kind; a presumption absurd enough; for among all the possible good things that do or might exist, there is of course only *one* of them which is *best* both in degree and kind; and therefore upon the presumption we have named, there would be only this *one* thing which God could create and repeat consistently with his perfections. This would be to limit at once the opportunities of divine beneficence. No, it is only necessary to shew that this creation is upon the whole good, to make God's producing it altogether consistent with his perfections. That he might have produced other worlds still better than this, is very probable—that he actually has done so, is very possible. But because he can do, and perhaps has done good in other, and it may be in better ways; we are not to think it inconsistent with his wisdom and goodness to have created this world according to its present constitution, in which, though imperfect, good predominates. It is upon the whole good, and therefore there is no just ground for the complaint that it is not *better*.

So much for the origin of evil, and the introduction of sin into God's world. All natural and moral evil spring alike from metaphysical evil. And this metaphysical evil is occasioned or permitted, not in and for itself, but only as it is essentially connected with the whole scheme of his creation; a scheme in which good predominates over evil, particular evil being made to consist with general good, and order and happiness being educed out of confusion and distress. To conclude this part of our subject with the words of Pistorius—"This question of the origin of evil, so important to the peace of mankind and so puzzling to human understanding, may in my opinion be reduced to this; When God gave existence to beings out of himself he must have made them limited, or have multiplied himself; if the latter be an impossibility, we must grant that his goodness and wisdom might produce beings with more or fewer limitations."

Having stated what we conceive to be the origin of evil and sin, we must now fulfil our promise to present certain objections which appear fairly to lie against the manner in which the Calvinists speak on this subject, and on those connected with it. We have acknowledged and we still acknowledge, that there is a *sense* in which God may be said to be the author of sin, since he has so constituted this world, and so placed us in it, that sin has arisen, and he must have expected it. We will even *suppose* that God has made our sins to be *necessary*, in the order of events. And as we have before presumed, so we will now presume, that it is only in *this*, which is the *true* sense, that Calvinists would represent God as being the author of sin, when they speak of the *divine decrees*, *hereditary depravity*, *personal election*, and *reprobation*, &c. If then we are asked, what objections we have against them; we answer, In the first place, their terms do not accurately express what we suppose them intended to express. They are popular words, and have a popular signification, which cannot be separated from them. When we say, that God foreordains and decrees the existence of evil, we convey not only the idea that he has occasioned its necessary existence, which perhaps is true; but also another idea, which even a Calvinist must acknowledge to be false; namely, that he occasions the existence of evil in and for itself—with a design and desire that it might exist, even if nothing else existed. This distinction must be insisted on. A legislator frames a system of government, which he foresees will occasion some evils; yet as he perceives that, upon the whole, the system will promote the good of those concerned, he puts it into operation. Now it is plainly an abuse of language to say, that he *decrees* the existence of those

evils which his system only occasions, and which he foresees it must occasion, though he would gladly avoid them, could he do it and still retain his system. Yet it is the same abuse of language to say, that God decrees the existence of that evil which he foresees will arise in this system of things. There are bad moral associations connected with such modes of speaking, and therefore they ought to be abandoned, as not exactly corresponding to the truth of things.

In the second place, we object to the language of Calvinists on this subject, because it is such as cannot fail of being grossly misunderstood by many to whom they address themselves. It is true that they may explain and limit and qualify their terms so that *to them* they shall stand for no more than what may be admitted. But it is morally impossible to make the great mass of readers and hearers understand these explanations, and limitations, and qualifications. They hear it broadly and positively asserted that God ordains and absolutely decrees the existence of evil ; and they do and they will understand by this, that he ordains and absolutely decrees the existence of evil in the same general sense in which he does the existence of good ; and you cannot prevent it. You may say it is their own fault, since you do what you can to save them from such a misapprehension of your meaning. But this will not do. Notwithstanding all you can say to explain and limit and qualify such language, you must know that the multitude will still misapprehend it ; and as it is one of the best settled principles of morals, that the promiser shall fulfil his promise in the sense in which he has reason to suppose the promisee understands him ; so likewise, on the same principle and for the same reason, he who undertakes to teach others is bound to use such language as shall not only be true in some one sense, but also in that sense in which he has reason to believe those to whom he addresses himself will understand him.

We object thirdly to the language of Calvinists, because we think it tends to introduce great confusion and apparent inconsistency into their thoughts and writings on this subject. Mr. Hume somewhere observes, that when he left his study and mingled with the world, he always thought and acted like other people—all the principles of his sceptical theory to the contrary notwithstanding. Something like this seems to be true of the Calvinists. While actually insisting on the technical part of their theology, they appear to differ very much from the rest of the world ; but as soon as they quit the formal consideration of their peculiarities, they seem to forget or disregard them ; and in the intercourse of life to think and act upon principles very unlike those they avow—upon principles in

short, that are precisely and identically the same with ours. It has been often and truly said, that every Calvinist is an Arminian, at least one half of the day : and those who are accustomed to hear Calvinistic preaching, know very well, that the preacher contrives, in almost every discourse, to contradict in the application, all that he has advanced in the doctrinal part. After having proved beyond controversy that men can do nothing at all for themselves, since every thing is fixed and absolutely decreed by God—they suddenly turn round upon their people, and tell them in language of direful threatening, that they must do a great deal, and that too quickly, or perish everlastingly. Now even were we to suppose that this inconsistency is confined to the *language* alone and extends no farther, still that mode of speaking and writing must surely be allowed to be a bad one, which thus carries on the face of itself contradiction. But we apprehend that it does and must extend further ; that the confusion and inconsistency of the language arise from that of the *thoughts* ; for we all know, or ought to know, that clearness and accuracy of thought go very much together with clearness and accuracy of language. If therefore we wish, in our popular discourses, to convince people that they really can do nothing at all for themselves, since every thing is fixed and decreed by God—we had better carry the same language through ; we had better do as the Antinomians do, and apply the doctrine, terrible as it may be, to the conduct and the life. For if we make our language self-contradictory, by mixing together technical and popular phraseology, using the same terms now in one sense and now in another ; we shall most assuredly confuse and confound, not only the thoughts of those whom we address, but also our own. And no occasional explanation of terms will be sufficient to prevent it. The bad effects of this mode of writing are strikingly exemplified in Mr. Locke's use of the word *idea*, in his Essay on the Human understanding.

There is one more objection, which, in our opinion, has not received the attention which it deserves. We have room for only a brief statement. Calvinists, as we have before remarked, mix together their technical terms and the popular language ; now we say, that from this composition of two different languages, they infer doctrines that are not true, understood in the sense of either language. We must illustrate our meaning. *Perhaps* we might not be very unwilling to admit that all human actions, if you trace back the whole history and concatenation of motives, are *philosophically* or *technically* speaking, necessary. We are also ready to allow, that in a *popular* sense, there can be no virtue except in doing what we might,

if we pleased, avoid doing. But we would by no means, admit that our actions are necessary, in a *popular* sense; because no one can pretend that the control, which motives may exercise over our wills, is of a *compulsive* kind: our actions are still *morally* free—free in the popular acceptance of the term free-agency. Nor on the other hand, could we by any means allow, that in *philosophical* language, there can be no virtue in obeying necessity—for virtue in philosophical language, if it mean any thing at all, must mean simply a moral fitness in actions—and this surely may be where there is *philosophical* necessity. Those, however, of whom we speak, pay no regard to these very important distinctions; but confound philosophical expressions with popular. In this way a syllogism is formed something like this.

Whatever men do they cannot help doing;

There can be no virtue in doing what they cannot help doing;

Therefore there can be no virtue in men's doings.

Hence the necessity of supernatural gifts; of imputed righteousness; and hence too the doctrine of total depravity.

We verily believe that it is to this confounding together technical language with popular, and so reasoning from one to the other as if they were the same, that most of the existing absurdities on these subjects may be traced.

Our readers may complain, and perhaps justly, that we have given them too much of our own speculations and not enough of the sermon we undertook to review. Our reasons for proceeding as we have done, have however been stated before. It will readily be seen that we fully concur with the writer of this discourse in maintaining that God is not the author of sin in any sense, which would imply that he has produced it by design or occasioned it in and for itself; but on the contrary that he has done every thing he could, consistently with his perfections and the constitution of things in this world, to prevent sin. With the writer of this discourse, we also perfectly agree in rejecting the doctrine of hereditary depravity, as making God the author of sin, in a sense which must not for a moment be admitted.

“This objection is evaded by saying that our corrupt nature is not from God, but conveyed to us from Adam in the ordinary course of generation. This evasion does not remove the difficulty in the least. Suppose that moral character could be conveyed by ordinary generation from parent to child (which however is a thing impossible) yet who has established the connexion between causes and effects, but he, who is the great cause of all things but sin? By whose appointment is it that the child shall, as an effect of being born of its parents, inherit all its parents' moral as well as

physical qualities? It is not God's? If so, he is as truly the author of the nature, which we have at our birth, upon this supposition as upon the other. If total depravity be a part of that nature, he, according to the theory under consideration, must be the author of it." pp. 12, 13.

We highly approve of the manner in which the writer of this discourse speaks of the unprofitable and even injurious tendency of introducing polemic theology into the pulpit. But when we consider that the doctrine of an hereditary depravity, "a total moral corruption, with which every person is born into the world, and on account of which every person at his birth is wholly depraved in the sight of God, indisposed to all good and disposed to all evil," has been adopted, and is still maintained by many, as a doctrine of divine truth—and regarded as indeed it is, as the very key stone of their system; when too we consider with Mr. Bartlett, that this doctrine is not only expressly contradicted by particular passages, but by the whole tenor and scope of the word of God;—"that it shockingly impugns the holiness, justice, goodness and veracity of God;"—that it confounds all our moral distinctions, and destroys all grounds of preference, of approbation, of blame;—that it is

"Formed to *depreciate*, not to *humble* man;"

since it tends not in the smallest degree to make men modest and diffident, but only to break down every thing that is generous and honourable in the human character; when we consider all this, we cannot but say, that we think it to be not only the right but the solemn duty of every preacher of the gospel to raise his voice against this infatuation. May it always be done with that clearness, conclusiveness and candour which characterize the performance before us.

"Although dissent from the doctrine of hereditary, total depravity is often very *conveniently* ascribed to an unconverted, spiritually blinded, natural state; to the enmity of the natural heart against divine truth; yet whether it be so or not is known to him only, whose sole prerogative it is to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart, and to determine its spiritual state. To him would we humbly appeal." p. 18.

From intimations incidentally dropped by the writer of this discourse, we conclude that some difference of opinion on this subject exists among the people of his charge. We earnestly pray that it may not lead to discord and disunion—the plague and curse of our churches. This full and ingenuous statement of his sentiments cannot fail, we think, to multiply and confirm his friends, and at the same time either to satisfy those who

may have been otherwise minded, or destroy their influence. We trust that God in his providence will spare him the pain of seeing those, over whom the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer, shut their hearts against his love, and refuse to be benefited by his friendly ministrations. Should it not be so, then indeed it will furnish us with another melancholy evidence of the pernicious influence, which a belief in the doctrines we have been opposing is calculated to exert on the human character, and especially on the social and kind affections of the heart.

ARTICLE XII.

Letters to the Rev. Wm. E. Channing, containing Remarks on his Sermon, recently preached and published at Baltimore. By MOSES STUART, Associate Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover. Second Edition, corrected and enlarged. Andover: Flag and Gould, 1819. pp. 180.

WE have no intention of giving a complete review of Professor Stuart's Letters at present. Before doing this, we thought it proper to wait for the appearance of the second edition, which was announced; but this having but just been published, we have since had no opportunity to remark at length upon its contents. We reserve to ourselves the privilege of resuming the subject in a future number. But if the controversy should continue, we think there are some important preliminary points which ought to be settled, and on which further explanation may be reasonably expected from Professor Stuart. We take the present opportunity of stating them, for the purpose of calling his attention to the subject.

I. Professor Stuart charges Mr. Channing with misrepresenting the opinions of the orthodox.

"The statement which you exhibit of our views is VERY FAR from that which we, (or at least, all Trinitarians with whom I am acquainted,) make of our belief." p. 17.

"I refuse assent to your statement of our belief." p. 18.

—"you have awakened in all those who differ from you a deep sensation——of misrepresentation of their views." p. 178.

These general charges ought not to have been made without being supported by distinct specifications. In what particulars, we ask, has Mr. Channing misrepresented the doctrines of

Trinitarians and Calvinists? After the accusations which Professor Stuart has brought, we have a right to expect from him a precise answer to this question; and we will state of what character we conceive this answer ought to be. The words of Mr. Channing's Sermon should be quoted, and compared with the authorized formularies of doctrine, adopted by orthodox sects and churches,—with their creeds, confessions, and articles; and with the works of those who are acknowledged by them as standard writers. We shall then perceive, whether any such discrepancy exists, as has been alleged.

Professor Stuart has undertaken to give some new views of the doctrines which he defends; and though we think the remarks of Mr. Channing as applicable to these, as to the statements commonly received; yet the former gentleman must perceive, that the question is not, whether Mr. Channing has given a fair account of the private opinions of Professor Stuart, or of those of his friends with whom he may have conversed on the subject; but whether Mr. Channing has given a fair account of orthodox doctrines, as publickly professed and inculcated by different sects and churches.

In the answer which we expect, we think it right to guard likewise against the introduction of any remarks, similar to some of those which Professor Stuart has already made. He accuses Mr. Channing of implicitly affirming that Trinitarians 'deny the divine unity.'* Every one understands, that all Unitarians regard the proper doctrine of the Trinity, as utterly inconsistent with the doctrine of the divine unity; but no Unitarian, we imagine, ever charged his opponents with denying, or even not professing to believe the divine unity; and it was therefore unnecessary for Professor Stuart to quote eight or nine different confessions, to establish the uncontroverted fact, that all Trinitarians do so profess to believe. To prove, or to endeavour to prove, that one doctrine held by a sect is inconsistent with another doctrine held by the same sect, is a very different thing from affirming, that one or the other of these doctrines is denied by that sect. Putting out of view every other consideration, except the *notoriety of the fact*, that ALL Christians profess to believe the divine unity, we think, if Professor Stuart will reconsider the subject, he will hardly be willing again to state or imply, that Mr. Channing meant to insinuate that this doctrine is denied by Trinitarians.

The charge of misrepresentation, then, is one point which we wish to have explained; and on which we think we have a right to expect further explanation.

* Page 21. See also what precedes.

Connected with the one mentioned, there are some other charges against Mr. Channing, which we regard as having had their origin in a misconception of the necessary character of those statements, which the object of his discourse required that gentleman to make. Mr. Channing writes against *doctrines*, not *persons*; but Professor Stuart confounds, (we wish they had not been too often confounded before,) an attack upon opinions with an attack upon the persons of those who hold them; and implies in consequence, that Mr. Channing has *intentionally injured the feelings of his opponents*; that he has treated them with "contumely;" that he has made it an object "to hold them up in such an attitude as to excite disgust or scorn or derision;" that he has "striven to degrade and render them contemptible," and that a review of what he has written will give him more acute sensations, than any thing Professor Stuart could say on the subject.* The distinction which we have just stated, appears to us a very obvious one; but as it does not seem to be clearly understood by Professor Stuart, we will illustrate it by an example. We believe, and we have a right to say we believe, that the doctrine of the Trinity contradicts the plainest declarations, and the whole tenor of the Scriptures; that in itself, it involves propositions as clearly contradictory to each other as any which can be stated; as clearly self-contradictory as if we were to say, that some being did not exist till yesterday and did exist from eternity; that the connexion of this doctrine with Christianity has been productive of the most serious evils; and that it has been a scandal to our faith, rendering it to appearance wholly unreasonable. All this, and much more, it would be no breach of Christian charity, or of decorum, to say with regard to the doctrine. But it is the use of similar language in Mr. Channing's sermon, on which we conceive Professor Stuart must found his complaints. As it respects those who hold this doctrine, and the other doctrines of orthodoxy, Mr. Channing speaks with no asperity, but with the temper of a Christian, and with the liberality of a man of enlarged views, who perceives that the character of an individual may be affected by many other circumstances, and some of them perhaps much more important ones, than the errors of the sect to which he may happen to belong. But if Mr. Channing had said or insinuated, that those who hold the doctrine in question, treat the Scriptures with contempt; that against the conviction of their understandings, they refuse to submit to their plain language; but in opposition to this, teach absurdities as articles of faith; if he had said that they were

* See pp. 178 and 149.

concealed enemies to Christianity, hypocrites, having their consciences seared with a hot iron; or even if he had insinuated that the younger part of their clergy, not having so much regard for religion as they ought, were travelling fast toward infidelity—we should then have regarded Professor Stuart's complaints as not unreasonable.

We confess that at present these complaints appear to us a little extraordinary, especially when we take some other circumstances into consideration. All Professor Stuart's readers cannot have forgotten the kind of language which has been used, and the modes of attack, which have been adopted for ten or twelve years past, by some of those who may be loudest in their complaints of Mr. Channing's sermon. All of them cannot have forgotten (to take one instance) how long the Panoplist has been made a vehicle of such falsehood and scurrility, as we should expect to find only in the vilest newspaper of a profligate political faction. And now, when a gentleman of the highest character has come forward to vindicate the opinions which he holds in common with many others, and has done this with remarkable dignity and forbearance, we think there are some considerations, which ought to have powerfully restrained Professor Stuart from making the remarks he has done.

II. But we proceed to our second topic of inquiry.—In a controversy respecting any doctrine, which is to be established, or disproved, by the words of Scripture, it is of primary importance to settle correct principles of interpretation, or, as Professor Stuart prefers calling it, *exegesis*. Without these, it is worse than useless to attempt to argue from the language of the Bible. But though Professor Stuart has repeatedly adverted to this subject, yet our present impression is, that his notions concerning interpretation are extremely loose and inconsistent; that he has no settled principles on which he proceeds. We wish therefore that he would give us in his own language, and in precise terms, a general statement of his opinions on the subject; one similar to that given by Mr. Channing. There is a short passage, indeed, in which he appears to have attempted to do this; but which seems to us to have been written with great inconsideration. After observing, that the Scriptures are to be interpreted in the same manner as all other books, he says;

“From this great and fundamental principle of all interpretation, it results that the grammatical analysis of the words of any passage; i. e. an investigation of their meaning in general, of their syntactical connexion, of their idiom, of their relation to the context, and of course of their *local* meaning; must be the essential process, in determining the sense of any text or part of scripture.” p. 52.

The amount of this we conceive to be, that the investigation of the meaning of a passage is the essential process in determining its sense. Certainly : or rather it is the *whole* process. But the point of our question is, *how* the meaning of a passage is to be investigated ? Professor Stuart proceeds,

"On this fundamental process, depends the interpretation of all the classics, and of all other books ; from this result laws which are uniform, and which cannot be violated, without at once plunging into the dark and boundless field of conjectural exegesis."

We do not perceive how laws or rules can result from a *process* as their foundation. A process is directed by rules already established. The fundamental process here spoken of, it is to be recollected, is an investigation of the meaning of the words of any passage. An *investigation* is not a general principle, from which particular rules may be deduced. He next observes :

"Whatever aid I may get from other sources to throw light upon my text, I cannot dispense with the aid which these rules will afford."

After an investigation of the meaning of a passage, according to those rules by which such an investigation ought to be conducted, we know of no aid which can be obtained from other sources to throw light upon the text. The next sentence is as follows :

"These rules are founded in a simple fact, that every writer wishes and expects to be understood by his cotemporaries, and therefore uses language as they do."

Here instead of the process of interpretation itself, which he had before assigned, Professor Stuart provides a new foundation for his system of 'exegesis ;' and what we must consider as rather an inadequate one. The simple fact, that a writer means to be understood by his contemporaries, seems to us a slender foundation, on which to build the whole art of interpretation. The last sentence of the paragraph is this :

"We presume this of the sacred writers ; and apply to them, as to the classics, (excepting that we allow for the Hebrew-Greek idioms in the New Testament,) the common and universal rules of grammatical interpretation."

We do not readily understand why Professor Stuart makes an exception with regard to the Hebrew-Greek idioms, i. e. the Hebraisms of the New Testament ; since but for this ex-

ception, we should suppose, that one established rule of interpretation which he would admit ; is, that we must attend to the peculiarities of style and idiom in the writer to be interpreted, and that he would regard this general rule as equally applicable to the classics and to the New Testament.

We have remarked upon this passage, thus particularly, because we think that this alone would go very far to justify the opinion which we have expressed, of the inaccuracy and obscurity of Professor Stuart's notions respecting the principles of interpretation. But to say the truth, this has not been our only motive. We consider it as a fair specimen of the looseness of thought and expression which prevails throughout his letters ; and one such specimen, as it happened to fall in our way, we were willing to give in our present notice.

But in answer to our inquiry respecting his principles of interpretation, Professor Stuart may perhaps allege, that he has already given his assent to all that is essential in those maintained by Mr. Channing ; and therefore it is not necessary to explain himself further. But to this we reply, that his manner of speaking of the principles advanced by the latter gentleman is one of those circumstances, which convince us that he is far from having any clear notions on the subject. He begins by stating, that these principles are one of the points on which "he feels *compelled to dissent* from Mr. Channing's opinions." After quoting them at length, however, he seems to have found them less objectionable than he had supposed ; and proceeds to give his "cheerful and most cordial *assent* to a great part of them ;" "he finds *little* from which he should *dissent* ;" "if there be any thing to which he should object," it is the "colouring which has been given to some of the language ;" and he finally concludes his general remarks concerning this topic, on which he had felt compelled to dissent from Mr. Channing, by claiming for the "divines called *orthodox*" the reputation of having adopted these very principles, "for substance." In his subsequent letters, he repeatedly expresses his agreement with Mr. Channing in all that is most essential in his principles of interpretation. To us however, while reading these letters, it was clear that the agreement was not so great as Professor Stuart supposed ; and therefore, though we were a little, we were but a little surprised, when upon coming to his last letter we met with such passages as the following :

"I am well satisfied, that the course of reasoning in which you have embarked, and the principles by which you explain away the divinity of the Saviour, [i. e. the principles of interpretation, on which Mr. Channing explains the texts brought forward by Trinitarians, in support of their doctrine] must lead most men who approve them, eventually to the conclusion,

that the Bible is not of divine origin; and does not oblige us to belief or obedience." p. 160. * * * * *

"For myself, I view it as incomparably more desirable, in almost every point of view, that the authority of the Scripture should at once be cast off; and its claims to divine inspiration rejected; than that such rules of exegesis should be introduced, as make the Scripture speak, *volens volens*, whatever any party may desire. p. 161.

We can conceive no propriety in this remark, unless Professor Stuart considers Mr. Channing's principles of interpretation as being of this character. But the point is settled by the commencement of the next paragraph.

"In making these observations, on the nature and probable consequences of your system of exegesis which explains away the Deity of Christ, I cannot think that I am building castles in the air, to amuse my own imagination. p. 162.

Similar remarks to those already quoted, may be found in the paragraph which commences on the 170th, and ends on the 171st page of the 2d edition. We think we never witnessed so complete a revolution of opinion within the compass of two hundred pages. *The wheel has come full circle.*

But Professor Stuart may perhaps say, that at the commencement of his last letter, he has quoted a new passage from Mr. Channing, which passage, not before quoted, contains a statement of that principle of interpretation which is to effect all the mischief he apprehends; and that he begins his comment upon it by saying, "I must *hesitate*," (the word is thus marked by himself, we should hardly have supposed that he would hesitate about adopting a principle which he regards as so pernicious,) I must *hesitate* to adopt this principle before examining its nature and tendency." The rule of interpretation referred to, as stated by Mr. Channing, (the *only* one contained in the quotation from him in the last letter,) is simply this: "Language is to be explained according to the known properties of the subjects to which it is applied." The rule is finely illustrated by him in the paragraph quoted; and as a general principle, appears to us indisputable. But with regard to the entire inconsistency of Professor Stuart's opinions; it is of more importance to remark, that this rule is involved throughout, and, what is still more, is *expressly stated* in the general account of his principles of interpretation given by Mr. Channing, with which Professor Stuart had declared his agreement in every thing essential. In this general account Mr. Channing says:

"Human language, you well know, admits various interpretations; and every word and every sentence must be modified and explained *according to the subject which is discussed*, &c.

To this rule Professor Stuart says, p. 26. that he assents with all his heart. Again, Mr. Channing observes :

"With these views of the Bible, we feel it our bounden duty to exercise our reason upon it perpetually, to compare, to infer, to look beyond the letter to the spirit, to *seek in the nature of the subject*, and the aim of the writer, his true meaning; and in general to *make use of what is known for explaining what is difficult, and for discovering new truths.*"

Again : "Who does not see that we must limit all these passages by the known attributes of God, of Christ, and of human nature, &c."

Again : "Enough has been said to shew in what sense we make use of reason in interpreting scripture. From a variety of possible interpretations, we select that which accords with the nature of the subject, and the state of the writer, with the connexion of the passage, with the general strain of scripture, with the known character and will of God, and with the obvious and acknowledged laws of nature."

Professor Stuart, after reading our remarks, must, we think, be convinced of the great convenience both to himself and his opponents, of settling his principles of interpretation, before he writes again so much at large upon the subject. When he has done this, we hope he will explain himself further, and state what he regards, as those "fundamental maxims of exegesis," of which he speaks so much in his letters. We suppose he will assent without hesitation to the general truth, that one who has no settled principles of interpretation, is not well qualified to criticise difficult passages in the New Testament.

III. But in the third place, we equally want explanation respecting Professor Stuart's notions of the doctrine of the Trinity, as concerning his principles of interpretation. In his general statement, he denies that there are three persons in the Divinity, in the proper sense of the word, *person*; but maintains that there is a real threefold distinction in the Divinity, of the nature of which distinction he professes to know nothing which can be affirmed positively. By the use of the word, *distinction*, instead of *person*, he regards himself as protecting the doctrine from every attack. All its inconsistencies and self-contradictory statements are to be covered up by this single word. But his arguments are at war with his statements. When he reasons from scripture, he brings NOTHING to establish the threefold distinction above mentioned; but all his arguments, if they prove any thing, prove that Christ is a *divine person*, in the proper sense of the word, *person*. Let us notice his remarks upon the first passage on which he comments, John i. 1—3. The Logos or Word here mentioned, he considers as Christ; and he asks;

"Who or what was this *Logos*? A PERSON; or an attribute of God? A REAL AGENT; or only the wisdom, or reason, or power of God?" p. 59.

And he goes on to prove, that the Logos was a real agent, a person, "diverse from that God with whom he was,"* and yet God,† and still further "most intimately connected with God,"‡ and last of all, "the supreme God."§ Christ, or the Son, then, or the second 'distinction' in the Trinity, which is the Logos, is clearly a person, in the proper sense of the word; whatever else may be thought of Professor Stuart's account.

In his comments on the two next passages which he quotes, Heb. i. 10—12. and Col. i. 15—17. he endeavours to shew that Christ, or the second distinction in the Trinity, is "Jehovah," "the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth;" "THE absolute, supreme, omnipotent and omniscient Being." Of course he must here regard this distinction as a *person*.

And page 93. He gives a new rendering to Phillipians ii. 5—8, for the purpose of making the Apostle say, that Christ (that is, the supreme God) "being in the condition of God, did not regard his equality with God as an object of solicitous desire."—The supreme God did not regard his equality with God as an object of solicitous desire! But the Being by whatever name he may be called, who thus felt respecting this claim of equality, must have been a person.

But what is proved by one passage of scripture, adduced by Professor Stuart, is proved by all, and implied in his comments upon all; viz. that Christ, as the Son, i. e. according to Professor Stuart, as the second distinction in the Trinity, is a person in the proper sense of the word. Does Professor Stuart really believe that it is the doctrine of scripture, that the Son of God is NOT a PERSON? Whether this person be God himself, is a further question.—We have remarked particularly on the few passages above referred to, rather because they seem to us to manifest a singular confusion of ideas in other respects, than because we thought it necessary to quote them, in order to shew the truth of our assertion, that Professor Stuart's own arguments disprove his general statement.

We will compare together two other passages, which may serve still further to make it evident, that we cannot well know with what we are contending in opposing Professor Stuart's doctrine of the Trinity. On page 43, he speaks of

"those Trinitarians, who have expressed themselves on this subject so incautiously, as to be understood to affirm, that there are three separate beings, (persons in the *common* sense of the word,) in the Godhead, with distinct powers, volitions, &c. If there be any now, who defend such a statement of this subject, I must leave them to compose the difficulty with Toellner, as they can."

* p. 61.

† p. 63.

‡ p. 64.

§ 65.

On page 127, addressing Mr. Channing, he says,

"But how can Trinitarians maintain that Jesus Christ is '*the same Being as the Father*,' when a prominent trait of their doctrine is, that there is a *distinction* between him and the Father? You yourself represent them as holding this distinction to be equal to that, which exists between two different men."

If Trinitarians do not maintain that Christ is the same being with the Father, of course they maintain that he is a different being. Do Trinitarians then express themselves incautiously when they say, that there are three separate beings in the Godhead, or do they not? Are there any Trinitarians who now defend this opinion, and is Professor Stuart one of their number; or are there none?

To the passage last quoted, Professor Stuart, perceiving perhaps its inconsistency with what he had before said, has, in his second edition, added the following sentence:

"This indeed, (i. e. Mr. Channing's representation) is incorrect: but it is equally so to represent them as holding that Jesus Christ is '*the same being as the Father*,' if you mean by this, *in all respects the same*."

We cannot think that he has happily extricated himself from the difficulty in which he was involved. It follows from his last statement, that Christ is in some respects the same being with the Father, and in some respects not the same being. In so far as the former proposition is true, Christ and the Father are but different names for the same being, that is for one being; and this one being is then Christ himself. With this one being, however, he is partly the same, and partly not the same. Christ, therefore, according to Professor Stuart's last account, is partly identical with himself, and partly not. We believe this is not *yet* one of the authorized propositions respecting the doctrine of the Trinity; though, indeed, we perceive no reason in the nature of the proposition itself, why it should not be. Christ, says Professor Stuart, is not *in all respects the same* with the Father. There can be no degrees or gradations of identity. We might, indeed, employ the expression, '*in all respects the same*' in popular discourse or writing; but then we should use the word, *same*, only in a loose sense, as synonymous with *similar*. It is obvious that it is not here used in this sense by Professor Stuart.

But there is one passage in which Professor Stuart states his opinions respecting the divinity of Christ, to the doctrine contained in which many Unitarians will find but little to object. It is as follows:

*One person, in the sense in which each of us is one, Christ could not be. If you make God the soul, and Jesus of Nazareth the body of Christ; then you take away his human nature, and deny the imperfection of his knowledge. But may not God have been, in a manner altogether peculiar and mysterious, united to Jesus, without displaying at once his whole power in him, or necessarily rendering him supremely perfect? In the act of creation, God does not put forth all his power; nor in preservation; nor in sanctification; nor does he bring all his knowledge into action, when he inspires prophets and apostles. Was it necessary that he should exert it all, when in conjunction with the human nature of Christ? In governing the world, from day to day, God does not surely exhaust his omnipotence, or his wisdom. He employs only so much, as is necessary to accomplish the design which he has in view. In his union with Jesus of Nazareth, the divine *Logos* could not, of course, be necessitated at once to put forth all his energy, or exhibit all his knowledge and wisdom. Just so much of it, and no more, was manifested, as was requisite to constitute the character of an all sufficient, incarnate Mediator and Redeemer. When necessary, power and authority infinitely above human were displayed; when otherwise, the human nature sympathized and suffered, like that of other men." pp. 48, 49.*

There is nothing in this explanation of the divinity of Christ, which might not have been written by a Unitarian of the 'straitest sect;' though we suppose that most Unitarians who hold the opinions stated in the paragraph just quoted, might prefer a little different use of language in their expression. The paragraph serves to shew the unsettled state of Professor Stuart's opinions on the subject in question. Let him adhere to the doctrine advanced in it, and make his other notions consistent with this; and he will find that there is little reason for him to engage in controversy with Unitarians.

IV. The next subject on which we wish explanation, is Professor Stuart's statement respecting the ancient doctrine of the Trinity, and the original use of the word, *person*. He says;

"The common language of the Trinitarian Symbols is, '*That there are three PERSONS in the Godhead.*' In your comments upon this, you have all along explained the word *person*, just as though it were a given point, that we use this word here, in its *ordinary* acceptance as applied to *men*. But can you satisfy yourself that this is doing us justice? What fact is plainer from Church History, than that the word *person* was introduced into the creeds of ancient times, merely as a term which would express the disagreement of Christians in general, with the reputed errors of the Sabellians, and others of similar sentiments, who denied the existence of any *real distinction* in the Godhead, and asserted that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were merely *attributes* of God, or the names of different ways in which he revealed himself to mankind, or of different relations which he bore to them, and in which he acted? The Nicene Fathers meant to deny the correctness of this statement, when they used the word *person*. They designed to imply by it, that there was some *real*, not merely *nominal* distinction in the Godhead; and that something more than a diversity of relation or action, in respect to us, was intended. They used the word *person*, because they supposed it approximated nearer to expressing the ex-

istence of a *real distinction*, than any other which they could choose. Most certainly, neither they, nor any intelligent Trinitarian could use this term, in such a latitude as you represent us as doing, and as you attach to it. We profess to use it merely from the poverty of language; merely to designate our belief of a real distinction in the Godhead, and not to describe independent, conscious beings, possessing *separate* and *equal essences*, and *perfections*. Why should we be obliged so often to explain ourselves on this point?" pp. 21, 22.

Again: "It might have been justly expected, likewise, that before they (Trinitarians) were charged with subverting the divine Unity, the meaning of the word *person*, in the ancient records which describe its first introduction into the Symbols of the Church, should have been carefully investigated. One of your rules of exegesis, to which I have with all my heart assented, demands that 'every word should be modified and explained, according to the *subject* which is discussed, according to the *PURPOSES*, feelings, *circumstances* and principles of the writer.' Do us the justice to apply this law of interpretation to our language, and the dispute between us about the meaning of *person* is forever at an end." p. 23.

We have before remarked, that it is impossible for one, who holds Professor Stuart's opinions, to get rid of the idea of three persons, though he may discard the name. But this is not to our present purpose. Professor Stuart says, that the Nicene Fathers meant to deny the doctrine of Sabellius, when they used the word, *person*. We were not aware that the Nicene Fathers, in declaring what they regarded as the orthodox faith, had any particular reference to the errors of Sabellius; and with regard to the word *person*, they did not use it at all; as Professor Stuart may perceive by reading over their creed, which is to be found in the prayer book of the Episcopal church, not to mention any higher source to which he might recur. In saying that they did not use the word, *person*, we mean of course to assert that they used neither of the two Greek words (*ὑποστάσις* or *πρόσωπον*) which, in relation to this subject, are considered as corresponding to the English word *person*.

But according to Professor Stuart, the Nicene Fathers, or, if he will allow us to make the substitution, the Fathers of the four first centuries, when they affirmed that there were three persons in the Godhead, meant merely to express their disagreement with the reputed errors of the Sabellians; and by no means to convey the sense which would be received, if the word, *person*, were understood in its common acceptance in our own language. Nothing, he says, in Church History, is plainer than this fact. If it be so, it is a fact, which has been generally misunderstood by those who have given the history of the doctrine.

"It is certain," says Whitby, "and is proved at length by the celebrated Cudworth, that the Nicene Fathers themselves,

and many other of the Fathers, did not at all suppose a single or individual unity (of nature in the Trinity) but only a specific unity, common to many, in the same manner as they ascribed the same essence to three different men."

The passage is quoted from the work in which he animadverts upon Bishop Bull's celebrated defence of the Nicene faith, which latter is a standard book among the orthodox Trinitarians of the English church. We mention this, because Whitby goes on to observe, that according to Bishop Bull's own statements, it appears that the "Nicene Fathers regarded the Son as of one substance with the Father, only as Peter and Paul, or a human father and son, are of one substance; that is, the unity of nature was regarded by them not as numerical and single; but only specific."*

That is, the members of the Nicene council regarded the Father and Son as two different persons, or beings, having the same specific (divine) nature; as two different men have the same specific (human) nature; the Son being, as it is expressed in their creed, "God of God." So we have thought; and this, or something very like this, we believe, is the prevailing statement of those who have studied the history of the doctrine in question. But Professor Stuart, who 'peruses the reasonings of Athanasius with great pleasure,'† and of course must be familiar with the whole history of the controversy decided by the council of Nice, may perhaps be able to explain the origin of the common mistake respecting the belief of its members.

Professor Stuart says that the word, *person*, was introduced in opposition to the errors of Sabellius. We beg leave to call his attention to what was actually done in opposition to those of Paul of Samosata, who held similar opinions to those of Sa-

* We give the whole passage from Whitby.

'Est tamen certum, et a Cl. Cudworthio multis argumentis demonstratum, Patres ipsos *Nicanos*, aliosque complures, unitatem singularem aut individualement, nequiquam intellexisse, sed tantum specificam, et pluribus communem, eodem plane modo, quo tribus hominibus eandem essentiam tribuebant. Sed nemo certius hoc ipsum demonstrat quam ipse Præsul Cl. (*Bullus*) in longa illa περί του ὁμοσίου dissertatione, quam Patrum testimoniis præmittit. Nec enim aliter brutorum animæ dici possunt nobis ὁμοσίοι; astra omnia, Sol et Luna ὁμοσία; angeli et dæmones ὁμοσίοι; bruta denique secundum corpus hominibus ὁμοσία. Cum igitur ex præmissis hisce exemplis Sectione secunda, tertia sic incipit, hoc ipso sensu Filium Patri ὁμοσίου dixisse *Nicanos* antistites, æquis omnibus et non plane contentiosi ingenii hominibus, ex ipsis Symboli Nicæni verbis manifestum fiet; ultro fatetur Præsul Cl. juxta Symboli Nicæni patres, Filium cum Patre unam substantiam haud aliter habuisse quam Petrum et Paulum, aut patrem et filium inter homines; hoc est non unitate numerica et singulari, sed tantum specifica.' Whitby, *Disquisitiones Modestæ in Cl. Bulli Defensionem Fidei Nicænæ. Lib. II. Proemium.*

† Page 121.

bellius. The council of Antioch, convened about sixty years before that of Nice, regarding him as having confounded the distinction between the Father and the Son, in order to express their own sense of this distinction, declared that the Son was *not* consubstantial, (*ὁμοουσιος*) or of the same nature with the Father. This was the orthodoxy of the third century, which was opposed to the Sabellian heresy. Afterward the council of Nice declared that the Son *was* consubstantial or of the same nature with the Father; that is, in the sense before explained.

But with regard to the word, *person*, Professor Stuart further observes:

"I could heartily wish, indeed, that the word *person* never had come into the Symbols of the Churches, because it has been the occasion of so much unnecessary dispute and difficulty. But since it has long been in common use, it is difficult, perhaps impossible, altogether to reject it. If it must be retained, I readily concede that the use of it ought to be so guarded, as not to lead Christians generally into erroneous ideas of God. Nor can I suppose that the great body of Christians have such ideas, or understand it to mean that which you attribute to us as believing. Then surely it is not the best mode of convincing your opponents, to take the word in a sense so different from that in which they understand it, and then charge them with the ABSURDITIES consequent upon the *language* of their creed." p. 23.

We suppose that it is to the same subject likewise, that the following general remarks apply, as we can perceive nothing else to which they may have reference:

"I am sensible that allegations are frequently made, that we receive our systems of belief from the Creeds and Confessions of faith, which have descended from former unenlightened, and superstitious or philosophizing ages. That some of our *phraseology* has been derived from men, who *sometimes* speculated too boldly, and substituted names for ideas; I am ready to concede. I feel the embarrassments, that on account of this, are occasionally thrown in the way of inculcating truth, at the present time. Men are very apt to suppose, that if you throw away the old *terms*, or *names*, you reject the old ideas also. Yet it can be only superficial thinkers, who will soberly believe this. It is in general, therefore a sufficient reason with me for dismissing phraseology, *when it must, almost of necessity, be misunderstood by the great body of men*. Yet, a sudden and entire revolution, in this respect, would be very undesirable; because such a revolution must again lead, at first, to other misapprehensions. I am willing, therefore, to retain many terms, which have become venerable for their antiquity, that I should reject without hesitation, if they were now presented *de novo*." p. 119.

We wish to know how Professor Stuart can be so confident, that language, the use of which it is necessary to guard with a commentary, in order to prevent it from conveying erroneous

ideas; and which must, without such commentary, be almost necessarily understood in a certain sense, was not meant by those who have employed it, to be understood in this sense. We do not ask for any such license in interpreting the language of scripture, as Professor Stuart has assumed in interpreting the creed of the Institution with which he is connected; that creed which he has so solemnly professed to believe, and promised to maintain and inculcate. In this it is affirmed; "that in the Godhead are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one God, the same in substance, EQUAL in power and glory." Power and glory, in the sense here intended, are personal attributes. They are affirmed to belong *equally* to the three subjects mentioned. But *equality* is a term of relation and comparison, and can be affirmed only of *different* subjects. When we say that a thing is *equal*, we must mean, if we have any meaning, that it is equal to some *other* thing. The personal attributes then, which are spoken of in the passage quoted, must be perfectly distinct, and belong to three different persons; in such a manner that we may compare the power and glory of the one with the power and glory of either of the others, and affirm that the former are equal to the latter. If the creed had declared that their power and glory were *the same*, there might have been some pretence for saying, that it admitted of being explained in a sense conformable to Professor Stuart's statements respecting the doctrine in question. But as it is, no language can express more decidedly the doctrine, that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead, in the proper sense of the word person.

V. We have already extended this article to a far greater length than we intended when we sat down to write. But before concluding it, there is one more topic to which we wish to advert. It is the apprehension, or, as we believe we must call it, the hope, which Professor Stuart expresses of the progress of infidelity in this country, especially among our clergy, and in that form particularly which it has assumed in Germany. This is the subject of the last twenty pages of his pamphlet. We will quote a sentence or two.

"I make no pretensions to uncommon foresight, in regard to this subject. I certainly do not say these things with invidious designs, and for the sake of kindling the fire of contention. Very far from it. On the contrary; I believe that the parties now contending here, will have no quiet, until this ground be openly taken, on your part. For myself, I view it as INCOMPARABLY MORE DESIRABLE, in almost every point of view, that the authority of the Scripture should at once be cast off; and its claims to divine inspiration rejected; than that such rules of exegesis should be introduced, as make the Scripture speak, *volens volens*, whatever any party may desire." p. 161.

"It needs now, only an acquaintance with German reasoners and critics, (a thing which is fast coming in,) to induce young men to go with them, who set out with your maxim, that 'to believe with Mr. Belsham is no crime.'" p. 169.

"For myself, it is my real conviction, that the sooner matters come to this issue the better." * * * * *

"I shall be ready to confess my apprehensions are quite erroneous, if the lapse of a few years more does not produce the undisguised avowal of the German divinity, in all its latitude. I anticipate this, because I believe that the laws of exegesis, when thoroughly understood, and applied without any party bias, will necessarily lead men to believe, that the apostles inculcated, for substance, those doctrines which are now called *orthodox*. And as there probably will be not a few, who will reject these doctrines, my apprehension is, that to take the German ground will be deemed both ingenuous and expedient." p. 175.

We are sorry to deprive Professor Stuart of his pleasing anticipations of a state of things 'incomparably more desirable' than the present. But we must observe, in the first place, that we are satisfied that he has himself no settled principles of interpretation; and therefore cannot well judge, to what opinions correct principles of interpretation will lead. For ourselves, we are equally satisfied that they will lead to a belief, that what he regards the doctrines of orthodoxy are thoroughly opposed to the whole tenor of scripture; and find no support in any part of it. We believe that if we adopt the same mode of interpretation by which these are deduced from the scriptures, there is no error or absurdity so gross that it may not find support in the sacred writings; and that by the same mode of interpretation, opinions equally irrational may be discovered in the works of any popular writer whom he may chance to take in hand. We shall therefore not be compelled to renounce the scriptures, in order to get rid of the doctrines of orthodoxy. But we will concede so much as this to Professor Stuart; that if we did believe these doctrines to have been taught by Christ and his apostles, we should then think that a most overwhelming weight of external evidence would be necessary to establish the truth of a revelation, which would appear to us to contain so much internal evidence *against* its truth. He will perceive, however, from this remark, that we cannot think a *rejection* of these doctrines likely to be a very efficient cause of infidelity.

But it is to the rejection of these doctrines, that Professor Stuart attributes the infidelity which exists in Germany. We should suppose that one, though even but slightly acquainted with the state of continental Europe for the last century, with the history of opinions, and particularly with the history of German literature, might discover very different causes of sufficient efficacy to produce the phenomenon in question. To

what does Professor Stuart attribute the infidelity which has prevailed throughout other nations on the continent of Europe. When he has determined the causes of this, he will not be at a loss, we think, to account for the origin of German unbelief. We should as little think of attributing the *naturalism* (as it is called) of the German critics and theologians to their rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity, as of attributing the infidelity of the philosophers and many of the dignified clergy in France before the revolution, to their rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation. As it respects that class of modern German theologians to which Professor Stuart particularly refers, we confess that as far as our acquaintance with them extends, we do not regard them with quite so much admiration as he expresses; we do not consider them as such very great men; nor do we think their theories and arguments so plausible and seductive, that much is to be feared from a more general knowledge of their writings.

We shall conclude the present article with a few general remarks upon the character of Professor Stuart's letters. They are written with considerable decorum and propriety. To this however, there are some exceptions, particularly in the last letter. But they are written with very great decorum and propriety, compared with the style of attack which has usually been adopted among us, in opposing the opinions maintained by Mr. Channing. Every one must be struck with the change in this respect; and all the credit to which Professor Stuart is entitled should be willingly allowed him. As a specimen of his talents and learning, we cannot think that these letters do him justice. We are very ready to give him credit for both; and we think we can perceive some causes, which, without calling either in question, may account for the character of his present work. It appears to us to bear marks of having been written very hastily and inconsiderately. Not much advantage seems to have been taken of the opportunity for correction afforded by a second edition; and indeed we think the materials of the first edition such, as not to have admitted of much improvement. He has engaged in the defence of a doctrine, in maintaining which, if any one may appear to much advantage, it must be a very cautious and adroit controversialist, perfectly well acquainted with the ground which he intends to take, and aware of the difficulties with which he will be pressed on every side. Certainly, no one can hope to manage the controversy with much dexterity, who comes to the subject with his own notions respecting it so unsettled and undefined, as those of Professor Stuart appear to us to be. Much of the character of his pamphlet we attribute likewise to the studies in which he

has been engaged, considered in connexion with his system of faith. We can hardly conceive a greater chaos of inconsistent opinions, than we should suppose would exist in the mind of a man pledged to maintain the doctrines of the highest orthodoxy, and at the same time an extravagant admirer of the modern school of German theologians. All, which is most deserving of praise in these writers, seems to us not less irreconcilable with the doctrines held by Professor Stuart, than those speculations which are most obnoxious to censure. What form his opinions will finally assume, we do not pretend to determine. That he will adopt what we should regard as rational views of Christianity, we scarcely venture to hope. The course of his studies does not seem likely to lead to this result.

In our next number we intend resuming the consideration of those topics which are suggested by the subject of the present article; unless indeed Professor Stuart should in the mean time be convinced, as we are, that his letters are not a fair specimen of his talents or learning, and, if he pleases, not so able a defence, as he can give, of the doctrine in question. If he should in any way signify this, so that we can justify ourselves to the public, we shall willingly refrain from any further examination of his pamphlet. If on the other hand, he should undertake to answer any of the inquiries proposed in this article, we shall of course pay all proper attention to his reply.

INTELLIGENCE.

Theological Education in Harvard University.

It is highly gratifying to the friends of our University to mark its progress in the means and facilities of instruction, and the distinguished place it occupies in the public estimation. We notice with much pleasure the establishment of a new Professorship in the important department of Theology, and the accession it has received in the talents and zeal of the gentleman designated to fill it. On Tuesday, August 10, Mr. Andrews Norton was inducted into the Dexter Professorship of Sacred Literature. The foundation was the Lectureship, established at the College by the munificence of Hon. Samuel Dexter, and since erected by the Corporation into a Professorship, retaining the name of its original benefactor. We are happy to state that the Inaugural Discourse, delivered on the occasion, has been given to the public.

On Tuesday, August 24th, the day preceding commencement, 'the Society for promoting Theological Education at Cambridge' held their Annual meeting, when the usual officers were chosen, and the annual report exhibited; the following abstract of which will show the state of its funds and modes of application; and at the same time, we hope, will draw the patronage of the public to its wants.

The Directors report, "that the amount, advanced during the past year for the assistance of Theological Students, derived from annual subscriptions, &c: is \$467.

"That a new Professorship in the department of Theology has been established at the University; towards the support of which the Trustees appropriated seven hundred and forty dollars annually, from the income of the permanent fund; that four hundred dollars from the same income are applied to the assistance of Students; and that the capital subject to the disposal of the Trustees, is \$32195,51.

"The number of Candidates and Students in Divinity at the College, at the beginning of the present College year, was forty-four: eight of whom within that period have been settled in the ministry; one in Baltimore, and one in Mississippi; the others in the Commonwealth: two are under calls at a distance; one in Charleston, S. C.; the other in the Episcopal Church in New-York State: one has been obliged to leave preaching on account of ill health; one has been taken from his studies and prospects here by untimely death; and six are candidate preachers.

"The number, who have been subjects of the aid of the University, in order to their support and encouragement in their studies, is about twenty; to whose assistance about three thousand dollars have been applied; of which \$867,20 have accrued from the funds provided by the Society."

And the Directors conclude by stating, "that if any additional sums can be obtained by the Society for the object proposed, they will serve to supply pressing demands of the Theological Seminary."

The annual discourse was delivered, at the Church in Federal Street, on the evening of the Lord's day preceding Commencement, by the Rev. William E. Channing; from 1 Cor. xii. 28. "God hath set some in the Church; first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers."

It had been our intention to have connected with this general notice, some remarks on the importance of our Theological Institution, and its strong claims on the patronage of the Christian community. But we are in great hopes, that the discourse, to which we have referred, will be given to the public; and

will excite the attention, which the sacredness of the subject, and the ability and earnestness with which it is exhibited, may justly demand.

Religious Tracts.—At a late meeting of the Society for conducting the Christian Disciple, it was determined to commence immediately the publication of religious Tracts, in a cheap form, for distribution. The preliminary arrangements have been made, and the publication of some tracts effected ; more will soon follow, and we respectfully solicit the aid and co-operation of our friends and the public in the promotion of this object.

The Tracts intended to be published will be both doctrinal and practical, original and selected ; and in their general character, will correspond with that of the Christian Disciple and Theological Review. The necessity and utility of such a design must be obvious. Many persons accustomed to distribute Tracts have complained of the difficulty of procuring precisely such as they were willing to circulate. They could find abundance,—but not all unexceptionable ; some inculcate the very errors in doctrine they wish to discourage, and some a spirit of practical religion which they cannot altogether approve. It is designed by the present plan to give such persons the opportunity of obtaining what they can conscientiously recommend, and may circulate in the hope of promoting true religion. In order to accomplish this however, in the degree which is desirable, considerable funds will be necessary. We trust that those who are sensible of the importance of the object will be forward in lending it a generous aid. The cause of what they regard liberal and uncorrupt Christianity demands it ; and their reward shall be, not only the hearty thanks of those whom they assist, but, what is vastly more, the satisfaction of seeing that they have helped to carry forward the progress of truth and holiness.

Every subscriber will be entitled to receive Tracts, to the full amount of his subscription, at the shop of our publishers ; of whom any information on the subject may be obtained.

Already published, Mr. Channing's Sermon at Baltimore ; and 'Henry Goodwin, or, the Contented Man.' In a few days will be ready also, the Essay on 'the Holy Spirit,' which appears in this number of the Disciple.

INSTALLATION.

On Wednesday the 25th of July, the Rev. WM. FROTHINGHAM was installed pastor of the Congregational Society in Belfast, Maine. Rev. Mr.

Lowell, of Boston, made the introductory prayer, and read the result of Council. Rev. Dr. Ripley, of Concord, preached. Rev. Mr. Mason, of Castine, prayed after Sermon. Rev. Dr. Allyn, of Duxbury, gave the charge, and read a select portion of Scripture. Rev. Dr. Packard, of Wiscasset, made an address to the people. Rev. Mr. Warren, of Jackson, presented the right hand of fellowship, and Dr. Ripley offered the concluding prayer.

The circumstances connected with the call of Mr. Frothingham, by the people of Belfast, are interesting, and deserve to be recorded.

They had been for several years destitute of a regular ministry, had become divided in their sentiments and feelings, and, in general, indifferent in respect to the means of religious improvement for themselves, and of instruction for their children. As sheep without a shepherd, they were scattered abroad, were exposed to become a prey to imposters and enthusiasts, and had no prospect of a reunion in the participation of religious ordinances.

Belfast, in 1810, contained nearly 1300 inhabitants, and yet not a sufficient number could be found to unite in defraying the expence of a candidate for a limited time.

In this state of things, application was made to the Evangelical Missionary Society, and was not disregarded. Mr. Frothingham was sent to them as a religious instructor, and the teacher of their children and youth. The result was, an entire unanimity, with only one exception, in a call of the Missionary to be their stated pastor, the erection of a large and handsome meeting-house, and the settlement of Mr. Frothingham with the promise of a liberal support, and the prospect of great and increasing usefulness.

Thus, the walls of Zion which were broken down, have been rebuilt, and the flock which had been scattered, and had followed the voice of strangers, has been again gathered into the fold, having its own shepherd.

On this occasion, the house was crowded, and they whose privilege it was to witness the solemnities of installation, can never forget the christian joy that was manifested; nor they who aided in the re-establishment of the ministry here, the feelings of gratitude that were expressed for the enjoyment of so great a blessing.

We shall be happy if the recital of these circumstances, which exhibit in so fair a point of view the judicious and useful exertions of the Evangelical Missionary Society, shall excite a deeper interest in that society; which, notwithstanding its limited means, has already been instrumental of much good, and if aided by the alms and the prayers of Christians, might be productive of far greater and more extended benefits.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The communication which came through the Post-Office was received too late for insertion in this number, and remains to be examined. As, however, an article on the same subject had already been prepared, we know not whether we shall be able to use it; at least at present.

Correspondents are requested to observe, that communications, not noticed in the number after they are received, will not be published.

☞ Our readers will perceive, that we have again given them eight pages extra; which will in part account for and excuse the delay of a few days in the time of publication.

THE
CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 73.

NEW SERIES—No. 5.

For September and October, 1819.

CHILLINGWORTH.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

THE life and writings of this acute theologian are, we fear, far less generally known than they deserve to be. We believe that our readers will gladly learn more of a man commonly spoken of as the glory of Protestants. William Chillingworth flourished in the reign of Charles I., a period in which, by the influence of his Queen, Henrietta, the Romish Church recovered in some measure its power in England, and filled the island with Jesuits. With that wily policy which has given them so much of their celebrity, they hovered around the seats of learning, insinuating themselves into the society of those students who were understood to be the most distinguished and promising; and the mind of Chillingworth was, even while at Oxford, successfully perverted by Fisher, one of the most subtle of these teachers. More effectually to secure his convert, he persuaded him to leave England, and reside for a season at the college of Doway. While here, the celebrated Laud entered into correspondence with him, and after an absence of not more than three months, he returned to England; in chagrin, if we believe some writers, at not receiving that honour from the Catholics which he expected, and which a new proselyte usually obtains; but much more probably in consequence of a second revolution of his faith, which the arguments of Laud are supposed to have produced. Chillingworth seems, at least,

to have been little mindful of his worldly advantage; for by his departure from Oxford he sacrificed his fellowship there, and if, as some Jesuits concluded, a year's probation at Doway would have more than compensated him for his loss, this he did not allow time to verify. These changes of opinion, happily, produced those habits of mind, that did not permit him to adopt any faith of which he could not give a reason to all who might ask him; and his patrons, all connected with the established church, and solicitous for his preferment in it, sought in vain to bring Chillingworth to an acquiescence in its doctrines. His mind revolted against many of the articles as unscriptural, and against the imposition of articles altogether, as an act of little less than Romish tyranny over the conscience.* The reply of Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Sheldon, to the letter in which his scruples were stated, is not a little amusing; "that he would by no means persuade any body to act against his conscience, but did not put the title of conscience upon an humour of contradiction; and that, to deal plainly with him, he was afraid it would ruin him here and not advantage him at the last day." He was at length, however, reconciled to subscription to the articles, regarding them as articles of peace and union, and not of belief and assent. This mode of construction, which his biographer states to have originated with Chillingworth, many at this day will perhaps think not very justifiable; and will be disposed to cast on him some of the criminality of that large proportion, probably, of the established clergy, who have since followed, and, it may be, have been influenced by his example.

This great man was treated with little real friendship or confidence in his own age by any class of believers; and Laud, who had over-persuaded him to submit his immortal work ("The religion of Protestants, a safe way to salvation,") prior to its publication, to the revision of three eminent divines of the Church; in a letter to one of them on this subject, says, "that he is very sorry the young man hath given cause why a more watchful eye should be kept over him and his writings."

* Chillingworth's most decided and strenuous opposition seems to have been to the Athanasian creed, especially to its damatory clauses; that creed, concerning which Tillotson expressed the "wish, that the church were well rid of it;" and of which Clarke informed Whiston, that he had read it but once, and then by a mistake as to the directions of the rubric. Of this well-known composition it has been remarked, "that in its primary principles it consists of two parts, of doctrines and of curses; the first are not intelligible, the last are: if it were the reverse," says Jortin, "it would have been more for the credit of the writer."

Disney's Memoirs of Jortin.

The production to which we refer equally vexed and dissatisfied at its appearance, the Establishment, the Puritans, and the Catholics; which no one will much wonder at, we suppose, when we say, that its writer, faithful to his professions, defended in it neither the communion of the church of England, nor of any other church, but the great and common principles of protestantism. Dr. John Prideaux, alluded to above as one of its censors, "would liken it only," says Antony Wood, "to an unwholesome Lamprey, by having a poisonous sting of Socinianisme throughout it, and tending in some places to plain infidelity and Atheisme." Such was the first reception in the world, by ignorance and prejudice, of a work, to which Protestants now with common accord appeal, and the principles of which they could not indeed abandon, without the utter surrender of their cause. Of the incessant stigmas with which this book and its author were then loaded, we will give a curious specimen below.* It is from Cheynel, a man of whom we are about to make some mention, and from another of whose tracts we shall give further extracts.

What Chillingworth's particular views of controverted doctrines were, it may not be easy at this distance of time to discover, especially when we remember, that regard to his comfort and even safety must have necessarily made him very cautious and reserved on this subject. Various circumstances render probable what has been affirmed by respectable recent authorities, that after vacillating in his earlier life amid the distracting opinions of that time, he settled at its close in that simple form of Christianity, which is continually approving itself more and more to the understanding and the heart. Some of the opprobrious names, as they were meant to be, which were heaped upon him, might have therefore had some shew of truth; but he liberally shared them, even at that time, with the great Locke, of whom he was nearly a cotemporary; and both their names have come down to times, when almost all the enquiring and the eminent rejoice to claim kindred with them.

* "Master Chillingworth, to speak modestly, hath been too patient, being so deeply charged by Knott for his inclining towards some Socinian tenets: no man in St. Jerome's opinion ought to be patient in such a case, and sure no innocent man would be patient. The Protestants doe not own many of those principles which are scattered in Master Chillingworth's book, and Knott could observe that he proceeded in a destructive way just as the Socinians doe. The Reformed Churches abroad wonder that we could find no better champion among all our Worthies: they who travailed hither out of ferrain parts, blessed themselves when they saw so much froath and grounds; so much Arminianisme and vanity in Master Chillingworth's admired piece. What doth it advantage the Protestant cause, if the Pope be deposed from his infallible chair, and Reason enthroned, that Socinianisme may be advanced?"

Chillingworth followed the fortunes of Charles when the civil war commenced, as an engineer; and was taken prisoner at the surrender of Arundel castle in Sussex. He was at this time very sick, and owed the peculiar indulgences which he obtained, to the good offices of Francis Cheynel, already mentioned, a republican and puritan, and equally zealous in the church and in the field. His respect for the great merits of his adversary, and even tenderness for his condition, make a somewhat ludicrous contrast with his abhorrence of his sentiments, and that fanatical severity of character which often embarrassed him in the treatment of his prisoner. Chillingworth died at Chicester while a captive, in the beginning of the year 1644, at the premature age of forty-two years. Cheynel soon after published a tract, now very rare, entitled "The Sicknesse, Heresy, Death and Buriall of William Chillingworth, &c." We present to our readers some extracts from this, not only curious we think, but characteristic, in a measure, of the age, and very strikingly so, of this singular enthusiast. They are related by Des Maizeaux, the biographer of Chillingworth.

"When I found him pretty hearty one day," says Cheynel, "I desired him to tell me, whether he conceived that a man living and dying a Turk, Papist, or Socinian, could be saved? All the answer that I could gain from him was, that he did not absolve them, and would not condemn them." Mr. Chillingworth being tired of such captious questions, begged of Mr. Cheynel to spare him, but our zealot answered that request with a severe reprimand. "When Mr. Chillingworth saw himself entangled in disputes, he desired me that I would deal charitably with him, for, saith he, I was ever a charitable man: my answer was somewhat tart, and therefore the more charitable, considering his condition and the counsell of the Apostle, Titus i. 13. *'Rebuke them sharply, or (as Beza hath it) precisely, that they may be sound in the faith.'* and I desire not to conceal my tartnesse; it was to this effect: Sir, it is confessed that you have been very excessive in your charity; you have lavished out so much upon Turks, Socinians, Papists, that I am afraid you have very little to spare for a truly Reformed Protestant."....."I desired to know his opinion concerning that liturgy, which has been formerly so much extolled and even idolized among the people; but all the answer I could get was to this purpose; *that there were some truths which the Ministers of the Gospel are not bound upon pain of damnation to publish to the people;* and indeed he conceived it very unfit to publish any thing concerning the Common-prayer Book, or the book of ordination, &c. for feare of scandal." At the same

time Mr. Cheynel shewed his readiness to procure him all the relief and assistance* possible.

"I commended," says he, "to the sympathy and prayers of the soldiers, the distressed estate of Mr. Chillingworth, a sick person in the city, a man very eminent for the strength of his parts, the excellency of his gifts, and the depth of his learning. I told them they were commanded to love their enemies, and therefore to pray for them. We prayed heartily that God would be pleased to bestow saving graces as well as excellent gifts upon him, that so all his gifts might be improved and sanctified; we desired that God would give him new light and new eyes, that he might see, acknowledge, and recant his errors, that he might deny his carnal reason and submit to faith, that God would bless all means which were used for his recovery, &c. I believe, none of his friends or my enemies can deny that we made a respectful and christian mention of him in our prayers."

The royal party, as Wood states, imputed to Chillingworth's being "troubled with the impertinent discourses and disputes of Cheynel, the shortning of his days." Cheynel seems on the other hand, to represent the depression of his mind in consequence of the delay of his friends to ransom him, as a main cause of his death. "I entreated him," he says, "to plucke up his spirits and not to yield to his disease; but I perceived that though Reason be stout when it encounters with faith, yet reason is not so valiant, when it is to encounter with affliction: and I cannot but observe, that many a Parliament-souldier hath been more cheerful in a prison, than this discouraging engineer and learned captive was in a palace: Believe it, Reader, believe it, that neither gifts, nor parts, nor profession, nor any thing else but *faith*, will sustain the spirit of a man in spirituall straights and worldly encombrances, when *without there are fightings, and within there are fears.*"

The account of Chillingworth's burial is as curious as any part of the tract. With respect to this it would appear, that Cheynel had been charged with uncharitableness; but he thinks his statement will, on the contrary, rather subject him to the "censure of a little foolish pity on his part."

"First, there were all things which may any way appertaine to the *civility* of a funerall, though there was nothing which belongs to the *superstition* of a funerall; his body was decently laid in a convenient coffin, covered with a *Mourning herse-cloth*, more seemly, as I conceive, than the usual covering patched up out of the mouldy reliques of some moth-eaten copes:*

* A sacerdotal cloak probably.

his friends were entertained according to their own desire with wine and cakes, though that is, in my conceit, a *turning of the house of mourning into an house of banquetting*. All that offered themselves to bear his corps out of pure devotion, because they were men of his perswasion, had every one of them (according to the custome of the country) a branch of Rosemary, a mourning ribband, and a paire of gloves." He acknowledges, however, there were various opinions in regard to his burial, one of which, it is worthy of remark, was, "that he ought not to be buried like a Christian." One reason for this was, that he had "taken up arms against his countrey," and another, "that he was an Heretic, and a member of no Reformed Church." It was at last determined, however, that he might, from mere humanity, be buried by the men of his own perswasion. "Now there was free liberty," says Cheynel, "granted to all the Malignants in the city, (meaning the Royalists and Prelatists) to attend the Herse, and interre his corps. Sure I am that if Mr. Chillingworth had been as orthodox and zealous a preacher as John the Baptist was, he might have had as honourable a buriall; for all the honour that John had was to be buried by his owne Disciples, Matt. xiv. 12. If the doctrine of this eminent scholar was Heretical and his Disciples were Malignants, I am not guilty of that difference. As devout Stephen was carried to his grave by devout men, so it is just and equal that Malignants should carry Malignants to their grave." Cheynel confesses also his refusal to read, according to Chillingworth's request while living, part of the service of the Common-prayer at his grave; and he alleges his reasons. "Now I could not yield to this request of his, for many reasons which I need not specifie; yet shall I say enough to give satisfaction to reasonable and modest men. I conceive it absurd and sinful to use the same forme of words at the buriall of all manner of persons; namely to *insinuate that they are all elected, that they all doe rest in Christ, that we have sure and certaine hope of their salvation*; and all this, and a great deale more, was desired by Mr. Chillingworth: blame me not, if I did choose to *satisfie my conscience rather than his desire*."

The Reader will hardly imagine now that Mr. Cheynel should go and meet the Malignants as he is pleased to call them, at the grave. But he was resolved to give here a new and uncommon instance of his zeal and orthodoxy. For though he refused to bury Mr. Chillingworth's corps, he must needs bury his book. This theatrical performance he relates in the following manner. "When the Malignants brought his Herse to the buriall, I met them at the grave with Master Chillingworth's

booke in my hand ; at the buriall of which booke I conceived it fit to make this little speech following." In the title of this speech it is called, "Mr. Chillingworth's *mortal* booke," somewhat unfortunately for Mr. Cheynel, we cannot but think, as it is said of a book, which through each successive age has gained an increasing, and now certainly a lasting fame. With the conclusion of his speech we close our extracts from this tract. "If they (i.e. his friends) please to undertake the buriall of his corps, I shall undertake to bury his errors, which are published in this so much admired yet unworthy booke ; and happy would it be for this Kingdome, if this book and all its fellows could be so buried, that they might never rise more, unless it were for a confutation ; and happy would it have been for the author, if he had repented of these errours, that they might never rise for his condemnation. Happy, thrice happy will he be, if his works do not follow him, if they do never rise with him nor against him. Get thee gone then, thou cursed booke, which has seduced so many precious souls ; get thee gone, thou corrupt, rotten booke, earth to earth, and dust to dust ; get thee gone into the place of rottennesse, that thou maist rot with thy author and see corruption. *So much for the buriall of his errors.*—Touching the buriall of his corps, I need say no more than this, it will be most proper for the men of his perswasion to commit the body of their deceased Master to the dust, and it will be most proper for me to hearken to that counsell of my Saviour, "*Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Kingdome of God.*"—Luke i. 60. And so I went from the grave to the pulpit, and preached on that text to the congregation."

Although Chillingworth, as an enlightened and consistent Protestant, advanced very far before his age, it had some who could appreciate his excellence. He lived in intimate society with the "ever-memorable" John Hales and the accomplished Lord Falkland. The highest encomiums are bestowed upon him by those illustrious men, Tillotson and Locke. By the former, he is styled the "glory of this age and nation." The latter, in a letter to Antony Collins, speaking of the tract we have been noticing, says, "I desire to acknowledge my obligations to you for one of the most villanous books that I think was ever printed. It is a present that I highly value. I had heard something of it when a young man at the University, but possibly should never have seen this quintessence of railing, but for your kindness. It ought to be kept as the pattern and standard of that sort of writing, as the man he spends it upon for that of good temper, and clear, and strong arguing." The

singularly logical cast of Chillingworth's mind, fitting him above all men for the task he assumed as the advocate of Protestantism, is strikingly exhibited in the fine character of that mind which Clarendon has given. "Neither the books of his adversaries, nor any of their persons, though he was acquainted with the best of both, had ever made great impression on him: all his doubts grew out of himself, when he assisted his scruples with all the strength of his own reason, and was then too hard for himself; but finding as little quiet and repose in those victories, he quickly recovered by an appeal to his own judgment; so that he was, in truth, in all his sallies and retreats, his own convert."

EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

IN a former number we offered some remarks on this subject, with the hope of attracting to it the attention of those of our ministers by whom it has been neglected. We would now only suggest a few observations on the manner of conducting it.

It is scarcely necessary to say that, in preparation for expository preaching, every minister, whenever he reads, should have open before him a *General Index*, in which he may arrange alphabetically, or in a better form if he can devise one, the subjects that engage his attention; references to illustrations of Scripture; and valuable criticisms on texts and words, to which he may have occasion to recur. Without this assistance to the memory, it will be impossible that much should not be lost, which it is very desirable should be retained. A book of this kind is very often greatly useful for other purposes, than of immediate preparation for the pulpit. It will however be found very important in the composition of sermons. But still more for expositions. A well formed general index of one's own reading,—I mean of one who has read as a student, may be, at least to him that has made it, the most valuable book even of a very valuable library.

Nor can I forbear to observe, that, as an important object of expository preaching is to illustrate *allusions*; to shew the bearing of facts mentioned by the sacred writers, upon the religious and moral instructions of scripture; and to bring facts of Jewish history and character which are not mentioned by them, to enlighten what is otherwise obscure, to shew the propriety of what otherwise seems unimportant, and to reconcile what at first appears to be contradictory; in order to a course

of intelligent and profitable expositions, *the study of Jewish Antiquities should be diligently cultivated.* Ministers who will seriously engage in this study, will soon find to what immense advantages it will be conducive in their study of the scriptures; and in their highly responsible office of teaching others, what the scriptures are designed to teach and to require of mankind.

I would remark also, that a man of true piety prays every day to God, before he enters upon the cares, and exposes himself to the temptations, of the ordinary business of life.—And in the midst of his business and his pleasures, he every day raises his thoughts to God, and thus prepares his mind for the scenes through which he is passing,—the trials that may be before him. And a christian minister should not do less in preparation for his daily studies, and in the daily prosecution of them. He may indeed preach to some, who will think and inquire for themselves. But if he is respected and beloved in his office, he will preach to many more, who will receive as truth, whatever he assures them is truth. He will probably give to far the greatest number of those who are accustomed to hear him, their views of religion; their religious sentiments; and thus, to a certain extent, their religious character. His responsibility therefore, is most solemn, and should be strongly and daily felt; and with this sense of it, should he every day go to the study of the scriptures. He will then go to them, not to build a system upon the foundation of isolated expressions,—the genuine import of which is perhaps wholly destroyed by their disruption,—and then call this foundation *Jesus Christ, or the word of God.* Nor will he at any time be satisfied with an interpretation, till by fair and ample investigation he has ascertained its meaning; nor shrink from any labours by which this investigation is to be made, and the actual import of the language of scripture is to be learned. A faithful expositor of scripture will never forget, that “in what concerns revelation, reason has a two-fold province. First, to judge whether what is presented to us, as a revelation from God, be really such or not; and secondly, to determine what is the import of this revelation.” And, “in what concerns the vitals of religion, *rectitude of disposition* goes farther, even to enlighten the mind, than *acuteness of intellect*, however important in other respects this may be” to a christian teacher.

In preparation for expositions, commentaries should be consulted. But not those alone, whatever may be their learning or piety, of any particular sect, or party in religion. Truth will sometimes be found where it is least anticipated; and to

be assured of the actual import of passages he would illustrate, should be the first object of him who would be a faithful expositor of God's word. Woe to him that preaches a gospel of man, for *the glorious gospel of the blessed God*. And are they not greatly exposed to the danger of doing this, who have enlisted themselves under the banners of a great commentator, and who receive the gospel only in his expositions of it?

"Most of our commentaries, it must be owned," says Campbell,* "are too bulky for the generality even of theological students. And we are sorry to add,—but it is a certain fact,—that in several of these commentaries, what is of little or no significance so immoderately preponderates over what is really valuable, that we may almost say of them, as Bassanio in the play says of Gratiano's conversation, 'they speak an infinite deal of nothing. Their reasons are as two grains of wheat, hid in two bushels of chaff. You shall seek all day ere you find them; and when you have them they are not worth the search.'"
But still there are some of very great value. We refer the reader to the end of the sixth vol. of Watson's tracts for a very judiciously selected catalogue of books, from which he may make a choice of some which will not be very expensive, and which will do much in qualifying a faithful student to be an able expositor.

We have alluded to the danger of placing too much confidence in the decisions of a favourite commentator. But perhaps there is not less danger, in pursuing a course of expositions, of forming fanciful theories of our own; and thus of teaching doctrines which God has not taught, and of inculcating duties he has not required. A man of quick conceptions, and of a lively, but undisciplined imagination, may easily find, or invent, mystical meanings, which will greatly charm those who have favourite systems to support, and who are fond of propping these systems by every expression, which they can make to bear upon them. Some of the ancient Jewish doctors said, that the scriptures had seventy-two faces; and some of the fathers of the church gave two senses to the language of the sacred writers, some three, and some even four. Some have thought they have found all art and all science in the bible; and many have found every doctrine of the gospel, at least as clearly and fully expressed in the Old Testament, as in the New. To those who are accustomed to give a double, or a triple meaning to the language of the sacred books, we recommend Benson's "*Essay concerning the unity of sense; to*

* Lectures on Systematic Theology, Boston ed. p. 35.

shew that no text of scripture has more than one single sense ;” and before they any longer indulge in this mode of interpretation, let them refute his principles, and justify their own.

We will quote from this Essay a summary of its principles. If they are untenable, let them be disproved, and rejected. If they are correct, they are of very great importance.

“Every text has only one meaning ; which when we have found, we need inquire no further. Literal passages ought to be interpreted literally ; figurative passages, figuratively. Historical narrations are to be understood historically ; and allegorical passages ought to be interpreted allegorically. In parables, the fact is nothing, but as it illustrates, or inculcates, the moral, or application. In figurative, or allegorical passages, the thing alluded to, in the figure, or allegory, is only to enliven or illustrate what is said. And he would act as unreasonable a part, who would interpret figurative expressions literally ; as he, who would interpret literal expressions figuratively. The obvious and grammatical, or the rhetorical and figurative, sense of the words, the time and place, the character and situation of the speaker or writer, and the relation which any passage has to his main view, or to the connexion, will, in most cases, lead an interpreter easily to distinguish history from parable or allegory, and literal representations from such as are mystical or figurative. And the judgment of a true critic, or faithful interpreter of holy scripture, will very much appear therein. But fancy and imagination are boundless ; and no rules, no limits, can be set to them.”*

It is perhaps an equally important rule, that we take care not unduly to *simplify* the instructions of the word of God ; or in other words, to make its articles of faith, and its peculiarities of doctrine and of discipline, as few as possible. Christianity is not only something more, but very much more, than a republication of the principles and hopes of natural religion, confirmed by miracles. It has its distinct characteristic doctrines, which the unaided reason of man would never have discovered ; and its corresponding duties, to which these doctrines only can be a sufficient sanction. We have stated what is the province of reason in the interpretation of the scriptures ; and a truly rational expositor will be not less cautious that he fail not of declaring the whole council of God, than that he does not pervert the divine word to the support of doctrines, which it was never intended even to intimate.

* See Watson's Tracts, — vol. 4, p. 492, 3.

In expounding a sacred book, *its general object, or objects*, should be clearly understood and distinctly exhibited. A careful attention to this rule will greatly increase the interest of hearers. It will enable them, in a great measure, to see the end from the beginning; and to follow the preacher, step by step, in his illustrations. It will secure him from the obscurity and perplexity, to which, otherwise, the occurrence of unanticipated subjects may expose him. This rule will be found of particular importance in giving expositions of any of the epistles of the New Testament.

It is a very important object too, in this kind of preaching, carefully to mark, and to observe the distinction, between facts and sentiments which are to be *illustrated*; those which are simply to be *impressed* or *enforced*; and those which are to be *proved*. From disregard of this rule, has resulted great confusion in discourses; great absurdity; and an entire waste of the labour both of preparing and of hearing them. Nor is it less necessary to be aware of the impropriety of accumulating arguments in demonstration of that which no one doubts; of attempting to make that clearer, which every one understands; or of giving the deepest impressions to subordinate considerations and motives, or the highest importance to sentiments and principles, which can exert but a partial and limited influence on character.

Expositions differ essentially from sermons. In a sermon, a text is perhaps expounded. But it is very important in sermons to maintain unity of object. A sermon is designed to give an impression of some doctrine, or duty of religion; or if it inculcates the various duties of any condition, or relation; or is intended to shew the bearing of different doctrines on christian duties; still the subject is, or should be, single, however various may be its illustrations, or the motives that enforce it. But an exposition may comprehend several subjects. Or it may have but one, as may be the case in expounding a parable, some parts of the Epistles, &c. the object will be, far more than in a sermon, the *illustration of scripture*. It will be a *particular consideration of every part of the passage, with a view of making it understood by the hearers, as it was understood by those to whom it was immediately addressed*. To expound is to *explain*, or to *lay open the meaning of a passage*. When this is done, exposition, properly speaking, is done. Having made this clear to the mind of the hearer, you may indeed give it all the moral point you can; but in as few words as possible. The shorter is the direct application, in almost every case, it will be more strongly felt, and more effectual.

I will only add, that it is not necessary to have given much attention to the effects of religious controversy, to be persuaded that, to whatever good it may be conducive when it is managed with a christian spirit, and when the subjects of it may be deliberately examined by readers who have leisure for the employment, it is never with advantage carried into the pulpit. It is an important object of preaching to hush the tumult of passion; to enlist in the service of religion and virtue all that strength and enterprise, which passion would give to vice; to unite men in affection, even when they cannot be united in sentiment; and to bring them as far as possible to unity of opinion, by shewing them, and by making them feel, how inseparably united are their interests in christian truth, and in all the means of real piety and of final happiness. Expository preaching has the advantage, more directly than any other, of fixing the attention of those to whom it is addressed, exclusively on the word of God; and if the lessons that are taught from it are made plainly to appear to be His word, and the duties that are inculcated to be His will, in the minds of comparatively few will there be any direct resistance. From the authority of God, it will be felt, there lies no appeal. But if the interpretations of different classes of christians be brought together, and opposed to each other, passion will be awakened, and opposed to passion. Men will lose sight of the tribunal of God, in the zeal they will feel for their own, and against the sentiments of others. They will become more interested to maintain their own opinions, and to put down those of others, than either to know what is truth, or to secure the divine favour. They will be very liable to mistake their own character of angry disputants, and noisy railers, for that of defenders of the faith, and the true followers of the Lord. A caution against controversy in expository preaching is peculiarly necessary, because this kind of preaching may be made, more easily than ordinary sermons, a vehicle of controversy. But if so employed, it will certainly defeat the most important object of this mode of teaching the word and will of God.

REMARKS OF JEREMY TAYLOR UPON THE CALVINISTIC
DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN.

THERE is perhaps no name among English theologians, which stands higher than that of Jeremy Taylor. He was eminent for the wonderful force and fertility of his genius, his extensive

learning, and the holiness of his life. He was particularly distinguished for his liberal and catholic feelings, living as he did in an age of bigotry and fanaticism, and when religious parties in England had been exasperated against each other by a long series of mutual injuries. His 'Liberty of Prophecyng' was one of the earliest books, in which the principles of toleration were stated and defended. I have lately been looking into his writings on the subject of Original Sin, and have thought that the readers of the Disciple might be gratified by the following extract, in which he expresses, in the strong language of unperverted feeling, the common sentiments of human nature respecting this doctrine.

"There are one sort of Calvin's scholars, whom we for distinction's sake call Supralapsarians, who are so fierce in their sentences of predestination and reprobation, that they say God looked upon mankind, only, as his creation, and his slaves, over whom he having absolute power, was very gracious that he was pleased to take some few, and save them absolutely; and to the other greater part he did no wrong, though he was pleased to damn them eternally, only because he pleased; for they were his own; and *Qui jure suo utitur, nemini facit injuriam*, says the law of reason; every one may do what he pleases with his own. But this bloody and horrible opinion is held but by a few; as tending directly to the dishonor of God, charging on him alone, that he is the cause of men's sins on earth, and of men's eternal torments in hell; it makes God to be powerful, but his power not to be good; it makes him more cruel to men, than good men can be to dogs and sheep; it makes him give the final sentence of hell without any pretence or colour of justice; it represents him to be that which all the world must naturally fear, and naturally hate, as being a God delighting in the death of innocents; for so they are when he resolves to damn them: and then most tyrannically cruel and unreasonable; for it says, that to make a postulate pretence to justice, he decrees that men inevitably shall sin, that they may inevitably but justly be damned; like the *Roman Licitors*, who, because they could not put to death Sejanus's daughters, as being virgins, deflowered them after sentence, that by that barbarity they might be capable of the utmost cruelty; it makes God to be all that for which any other thing or person is or can be hated; for it makes him neither to be good, nor just, nor reasonable; but a mighty enemy to the biggest part of mankind; it makes him to hate what himself hath made, and to punish that in another which in himself he decreed should not be avoided; it charges the wisdom of God with folly as having

no means to glorify his justice, but by doing unjustly, by bringing in that which himself hates, that he might do what himself loves; doing as Tiberius did to Brutus and Nero the sons of Germanicus; *Varia fraude induxit ut concilarentur ad convitia, et concitati perderentur*; provoking them to rail, that he might punish their reproachings. This opinion reproaches the words of the Spirit of Scripture; it charges God with hypocrisy and want of mercy, making him a Father of cruelties and not of mercy. * * * * * So that I think, that the Atheists, who deny that there is a God, do not so impiously against God, as they that charge him with foul appellatives, or maintain such sentences, which if they were true, God could not be true. * * * * *

“But because these men even to their brethren seem to speak evil things of God, therefore, the more wary and temperate of the Calvinists bring down the order of reprobation lower; affirming that God looked upon all mankind in Adam, as fallen into his displeasure, hated by God, truly guilty of his sin, liable to eternal damnation, and they being all equally condemned, he was pleased to separate some, the smaller number far, and irresistibly bring them to Heaven; but the far greater number he passed over, leaving them to be damned for the sin of Adam; and so they think they solve God’s justice; and this was the design and device of the Synod of Dort.”

Taylor then proceeds to state the account of original sin given by the famous Westminster Assembly, which we shall quote at length hereafter, and then observes:

“This device of our Presbyterians and of the Synod of Dort is but an artifice to save their proposition harmless, and to stop the out-cries of scripture and reason, and of all the world against them. But this way of stating the article of reprobation is as horrid in effect as the other. For,

Is it by a natural consequent that we are guilty of Adam’s sin, or is it by the decree of God? Naturally it cannot be, for then the sins of all our forefathers, who are to their posterity the same that Adam was to his, must be ours; and not only Adam’s first sin, but his others are ours on the same account. But if it be by the decree of God, by his choice and constitution, that it shall be so, as Mr. Calvin and Dr. Twisse (that I may name no more for that side) do expressly teach, it follows, that God is the author of our sin; so that I may use Mr. Calvin’s words; “How is it that so many nations with their children should be involved in the fall without remedy, but, because God would have it so?” And if that be the matter, then to God, as to the cause, must that sin and that damnation be accounted.

And let this then be considered, whether this be not as bad as the worst ; for the Supralapsarians say, God did decree that the greatest part should perish, only because he would ; the Sublapsarians say, that God made it by his decree necessary, that all we who were born of Adam should be born guilty of original sin, and he it was who decreed to damn whom he pleased for that sin, in which he decreed they should be born ; and both these he did for no other consideration than because he would. Is it not therefore evident that he absolutely decreed damnation to these persons ? For he that decrees the end, and he that decrees the only necessary and effective means to the end, and decrees that it shall be the end of that means, does decree absolutely alike, though by several dispensations ; and then all the evil consequents which I reckoned before to be the monstrous productions of the first way, are all daughters of the other, and if Solomon were here, he could not tell which were the truer mother.

Now that the case is equal between them, some of their own chiefest do confess ; so Dr. Twisse. If God may ordain men to hell for Adam's sin, which is derived unto them by God's only constitution, he may as well do it absolutely without any such constitutions. The same also is affirmed by Maccovius and by Mr. Calvin ; and the reason is plain ; for he that does a thing for reason which himself makes, may as well do it without a reason, or he may make his own will to be the reason, because the thing, and the motive of the thing, come in both cases equally from the same principle, and from that alone.

* * * * *

Now if the doctrine of absolute reprobation be so horrid, so intolerable a proposition, so unjust and blasphemous to God, so injurious and cruel to men, and that there is no colour or pretence to justify it, but by pretending our guilt of Adam's sin, and damnation to be the punishment, then, because from truth nothing but truth can issue, that must needs be a lie from which such horrid consequences do proceed. * * * *

But if all these fearful consequences, which reason and religion so much abhor, do so certainly follow from such doctrines of reprobation, and these doctrines wholly rely upon this pretence, it follows, that the pretence is infinitely false and intolerable ; and that (so far as we understand the rules and measures of justice) it cannot be just for God to damn us for being in a state of calamity, to which state we entered no way but by his constitution and decree."

The doctrine of original sin, as stated in the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism, is as follows:

Question. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

Answer. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness, wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually, which is commonly called Original Sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

* * * * *

Question. What misery did the fall bring upon mankind?

Answer. The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse, so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond-slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world and in that which is to come.

Question. What are the punishments of sin in this world?

Answer. The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections, or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes, and all other evils which befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments, together with death itself.

Question. What are the punishments of sin in the world to come?

Answer. The punishments of sin in the world to come, are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body without intermission, in hell-fire forever."

With these statements the following are to be connected which are found in the Confession. C. iii.

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.

"These angels and men thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

"Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and

good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his own free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes, moving him thereunto, and all to the praise of his glorious grace."

* * * * *

"The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

The Westminster Assembly's Confession and Catechisms are the standards of doctrine publickly received by the Presbyterian Churches in America. The professors of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, which is under the patronage of the General Assembly, are obliged to swear, "not to inculcate, teach, or insinuate any thing which shall appear (to the person taking the oath) to contradict or contravene, either directly or indirectly, any thing taught in said Confession of Faith or Catechisms." At the Theological Seminary under the care of Dr. Mason, the student is, or was, required to commit to memory the whole text of the Confession of Faith and Larger Catechism.

ON CONVERSION.

REPENTANCE and CONVERSION were the frequent subjects of exhortation with the ancient prophets, with John the Baptist, with Jesus and his Apostles. They urged these duties with the earnestness which their importance demanded. Every faithful preacher of truth and virtue since their time has not failed to repeat the emphatical exhortations of the scriptures to men to repent and be converted. While mankind remain what they are, repentance and conversion are among the first duties which they should perform. With many persons a radical change of moral character must take place before they can enter into the kingdom of God.

This subject should be understood. There are mistakes prevailing in some minds in regard to it, which are of a pernicious tendency. The object of this Essay is to offer some

remarks, which may serve to correct these misapprehensions, and assist in obtaining a proper view of it.

1. Conversion respects altogether the moral character, and means an alteration in the sentiments, temper, manners, or life. We do not understand by it any change in the natural constitution of the mind or body ; that a man, when he is regenerated, loses any of the faculties, which his Creator has bestowed on him, or acquires others which he did not before possess. In the scriptures, indeed, God is said to take away from men their stony heart, and to give them a heart of flesh ;* to give them a new heart and a new spirit ;† men are said to become new creatures, and to be born again ; but this language is figurative. If it must be understood literally, if the change implied in these expressions is a physical change, men would not have been called on to repent and be converted, since only a creative power can alter the nature which God has given them ; nor would they have been required, as they are by the same prophet, from whom this language is in part quoted, to cast away from them all their transgressions, whereby they had transgressed, to make them a new heart and a new spirit,‡ and to turn themselves and live. The language employed is strong ; but its strength implied only the greatness of the alteration which they were to make in themselves. In fine, when Nicodemus inquired of Jesus, how it was possible that a man should be born again ; our Saviour replied, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the spirit is spirit ; which is, as if he had said, I am not speaking of a natural or animal birth, but of that which is spiritual or moral ; and except a man be born of water, that is, be baptized, which was the customary rite by which a change of religion was at that time indicated, and, he adds, of the spirit, that is, undergo an alteration of feeling, sentiment and moral character, in which he would be assisted by the divine power, he could not see the kingdom of God, he was not prepared to become a disciple of Christ. This conversation had particular reference to the case of Nicodemus, but admits of an application to other persons more or less direct as their circumstances correspond with his. A more explicit commentary on this subject was given by Jesus, when he placed a little child in the midst of his disciples, and said, that except they were converted and became as little children, they could not enter into the kingdom of God. What was the design of this striking incident but to teach them, that in order to become in truth the members of the christian

* Ezekiel xi. 19.

† Ez. xxxvi. 26.

‡ Ez. xviii. 31.

family, they must acquire the innocence, docility, and meekness of children ; certainly it was not his design in this case to teach that any physical change was necessary.

We understand by conversion, the renunciation of erroneous sentiments, and the adoption of true principles, the purging from the heart every evil affection, and the introduction of others which are virtuous and holy ; the denial and subjugation of irregular and criminal desires and passions, and the cultivation of those which are innocent and pure ; the breaking up of sinful habits, and the pursuit of a course of life in accordance with the precepts and spirit of religion. A change of character of this description is **Conversion**.

2. We observe next, that conversion, as implying a great and remarkable change in sentiment or moral character, cannot be necessary to all persons.—Men are educated in every one of the innumerable varieties of religious sentiment, which prevail in the world, and, consequently, unless the truth remains in concealment from all, some persons have from their childhood been trained up in the knowledge and belief of the truth. If, for example, the views of religion entertained by Calvin be conformable to the Gospel—and it is not necessary in this case that we should affirm or deny it—there are many persons who have been educated in the belief of these sentiments, who have never doubted, and who continue with their whole hearts to believe them. Must the religious views of such persons be changed ? If their present sentiments are correct, the alteration of them cannot be desired.

Again, there are persons, who, blessed with faithful and pious parents, have been led in the way in which they should go ; whose hearts have always been tender and merciful ; on whose lips the law of kindness has always dwelt ; who have maintained the strictest habits of self-government ; who have always been accustomed to speak the truth, to be sober, chaste and temperate, to perform exact justice with their fellow men ; and who have humbly sought to understand the gospel and to conform to its requisitions. Kindness and mercy, truth, temperance, and honesty, the observance of the institutions of religion, are all christian duties and essentials of the christian character. The characters, which we have described having been trained in habits of early piety, have been used always to look up to God as a father and friend, with filial love, gratitude, confidence and devotion. Allow that such characters as these are of rare occurrence, yet they sometimes appear, and what remarkable alteration of heart, or manners, or life, must they pass through, in order to

come near to the standard of christian duty? We do not pretend that any human character is spotless, that any man is wholly without sin. Since men are but dust, and human nature is frail, it cannot be said of any man, that he has never transgressed the boundaries of duty, has never been found sleeping at his post, never stumbled nor fell in the path of his pilgrimage, never turned aside to repose in the heat of the day, nor been seduced from the straight course by some glittering phantom into the mazes of error, nor been found slaking his thirst at the fountain of criminal indulgence. Even the best christians, who have most deeply felt the sanctifying power of religion, sometimes do the things which they ought not, and omit to do what they should. Repentance with them is a daily exercise, and they are often found prostrate before the throne of infinite love, supplicating mercy from him whom they feel that they have chiefly offended. But there are those, who, "from their youth up, have kept the commandments of God," and, though guilty of occasional inadvertences and transgressions, have yet never been addicted to any habitual sin. What great alteration of character, deserving the name of conversion, as it is usually applied, can take place in such persons, which would not be injurious rather than beneficial?

On this topick, however, we may appeal to the teaching of Jesus, as decisive. He says to his disciples, "except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Is it not a fair inference from this language, that these children did not need conversion, for, as he said in another place, of such is the kingdom of God? Is it not equally obvious, that the persons, whom he addressed, having themselves been children, did not, at that time, need conversion. On another occasion he is more explicit: I came not, he says, to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; for they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. What do we infer from this, but that there were some righteous, who were not called to conversion; that there were some whole, who needed not the medicines of the great moral physician? It is pretended, that this was merely the language of irony and satire. This supposition seems derogatory to the gravity, frankness, and dignity of the character of Jesus.

3. We remark next, that conversion cannot intend the same thing in respect to all persons. When men are required to repent and be converted, this injunction is not addressed to all persons with the same views, in the same sense, and to the same extent. All are not required to do the same things, and

to undergo the same alterations. This injunction, like all the other precepts of religion, is to be understood with a reference to the particular character and circumstances of the persons immediately addressed.

The condition, attainments, views, and morals of men, are extremely various. The change of character which took place when a Pagan or a Jew was converted to Christianity, must have been different from any which can be experienced by one educated under the light of Christianity, made acquainted with the holy scriptures from his youth, and trained to an habitual attendance on the institutions of Christian worship. The Heathen in embracing Christianity must alter entirely his sentiments of the Deity. In the place of many, he must acknowledge only one God. Instead of his confidence in idols of wood and stone, made to assume any shape which his wild imagination might suggest, he was called to the belief of one indivisible and universal spirit, in no respect an object of sense, and who dwelt in light which was inaccessible. Instead of the superstitious, cruel, licentious, or unmeaning rites, with which he was accustomed to honour or appease the objects of his idolatry, he was to learn to worship God in spirit, and to serve him in the beauty of holiness. His moral sentiments must pass through a revolution hardly less considerable than his religious opinions; and in the disclosures which Christianity made to him concerning a resurrection and a consequent state of immortality and moral retribution, a world and a condition of being, of which, before, he had scarcely entertained a thought, much less possessed a serious expectation, was presented to his faith and hopes. The Pagan, in fine, was called to renounce a religion of endless superstition, mystery, and magnificence, in whose rites he had been trained from his childhood, and to adopt one altogether new to him, a religion of perfect simplicity and of the most unostentatious character; which openly condemned the folly and criminality of his former worship; which peremptorily commanded him to come out from among those with whom he was associated, and forever to be separated from them; and which was as different from the religions of his country, as light from darkness.

The Jew, in embracing Christianity, was called to an alteration of sentiments, manners, profession, and conduct, but little less than that which we have now described. It was for him in future to think of God, not as exclusively the patron and friend of his own nation, but as no respecter of persons, and the common father and the equal friend of all mankind. He

was no longer to regard the temple at Jerusalem, the object of his earliest and deepest veneration, the central point of some of his strongest associations, as the only place from whence an acceptable offering could be presented to the God of his fathers, but to learn that the ear of God was always open to the prayers of his children, and that he was accessible to all, at all times, in all places, and under any circumstances. He was to learn that the magnificent and imposing ritual of his religion was to be superseded, and in place of splendid and costly sacrifices, and whole burnt-offerings, the Deity required above all things the tribute of a spiritual worship, of pure and kind affections, and of virtuous and pious lives. His sentiments concerning the Messiah, the long desired and expected blessing of the Jewish nation, must be wholly altered. In place of those magnificent anticipations in which he had been educated, and which he so fondly indulged respecting the reign of the Messiah on earth, the advent of a temporal prince and conqueror, and the future glories and felicities of his nation, his pride must be humbled to the reception of a despised Nazarene, reputed an outcast by the world, and condemned and put to the ignominious death of the cross; whose kingdom was in no respect of this world; whose cause displayed no ensigns of power, was marked with no brilliancy of display, held out no rewards of rank, or honour, or wealth, to avarice and ambition, promised no future conquests, and proffered in this life to its faithful adherents only ignominy, persecution, and death. He was to renounce those deep-rooted prejudices in favour of his own nation and countrymen, which led him to regard the rest of mankind with contempt and hatred, and to receive the Gentiles as brethren of the same community and family as himself. He was to adopt a new rule of life; and so far from considering his duty as comprised in a round of mere ritual observances, he was to receive a law which extended to the heart as well as the conduct, which took cognizance of the thoughts and affections equally as of the manners and actions, and which required that his righteousness should far exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, whom he had been accustomed to reverence as models of extraordinary virtue and piety. Such as we have described, were, in some degree, the nature of those changes which were implied in conversion to the Pagans and the Jews. Of men, in whose habits of sentiment and conduct such revolutions took place, it might very well be said, that they were born again; that they became new creatures; that they were translated out of darkness into God's marvellous light.

But is it not apparent, that such alterations are not expected, indeed cannot take place, with those persons, who have always enjoyed the benefits of Christian instructions, who have been trained to the rules of life which the gospel inculcates, and have been the regular attendants on the institutions of christian worship? Nor even to persons, who are thus situated, does conversion always imply the same thing. All men are not involved in the same ignorance; all have not the same defects; all do not labour under the same errors; all are not habituated to the same sins. In some minds there are scarcely the elements of religious knowledge; in others, who are yet without God and without hope in the world, there are lucid and enlarged views of nature and of christianity. In some sensuality triumphs over the whole soul and pollutes it with its grossness: they are men, whose God is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame. In others, avarice enslaves the heart. Over some, ambition rules with despotic sway. The sin, which most easily besets some men, is drunkenness; in others, it is fraud; in others, cruelty. The characters of men are as various as possible. While some are 'wretched, sold under sin, in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity,' of others we have reason to hope that they are 'almost persuaded to become christians' that they are 'not far from the kingdom of God,' or that 'having kept all the commandments from their youth up,' they lack 'but one thing,' and are objects of the love of Jesus and of the Father. In short, repentance and conversion require, that you repent of and that you forsake wrong sentiments which you hold, and sins of which you are guilty. They do not require you to renounce errors which you do not hold, to quit sins with which you are not chargeable. You are to judge of the command by what you know of yourself. You are to call in the aid of an enlightened and awakened and faithful conscience to apply the injunction. You are to learn what you have to do, by seriously and strictly considering what is possible to be done. The field is given you to clear and cultivate. Inquire into its state and condition; into the uses to which it may be best applied, and the labour which it most requires. Build up the hedges which are thrown down; turn up the waste places; pluck up by the roots, and utterly exterminate the noxious and poisonous weeds. There may be among them valuable plants which you must protect and cherish; trees, which, if you will dig about them and manure them, will bring forth fruit; the deep places must be filled, the rough places made smooth. While you thus prepare it for the word of God, and receive the good seed, which

is cast upon it, do not doubt that the Great Husbandman, without whose aid and blessing Paul may plant and Apollos water in vain, will dispense his rain and sunshine in due proportions, that it may spring up and bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. Though before, its hedges were broken down, the boar out of the wood did waste it, and the wild beast of the field did devour it, though it was burnt with fire and was cut down, yet it becomes the vineyard which God's right hand hath planted, and the branch that he has made strong for himself. He prepares for it room, he causes it to take deep root, and it fills the land.

4. We add, that the business of conversion may proceed in different ways, and occur under different circumstances. This must necessarily be the case in regard to individuals, whose views, habits, sentiments, and condition are various. It may take place when persons have advanced but just within the confines of guilt, or not until they have proceeded to the excess of depravity. After having passed the boundaries of duty, and while, as yet, the conscience is not benumbed, it may rise upon us in all its strength, and utter its admonitions so loudly, and pierce our hearts so deeply, and disclose to us in such vivid colours our guilt and danger, that we suddenly fly from the polluted grounds, and with trembling steps regain the path of duty and safety from which we had wandered. Or we may, with a deplorable infatuation, venture at once so far that the obstacles in the way of our return appear insuperable. Having often neglected and silenced our conscience, it ceases to importune or admonish us. Our passions bear impetuous sway. The blind leading the blind, we proceed to the farthest limits of guilt and presumption; and not until we have drunk the cup of sin to the dregs, and feel the desolation and misery in which we have involved ourselves, while the retrospect inspires regret and agony, and the prospect throws up, in distant succession, only the cloudy forms of wretchedness and despair, it is not indeed until some dark hour like this arrives, that we drink in the last ray of hope; and, collecting the few remnants of resolution that are left us, and the scattered powers which remain as monuments of what we once were, we conceive the noble purpose to turn and live. Aided by Him, who is ready to help the weak-hearted, we free ourselves from the shackles of vice, and become the friends of virtue and the servants of God.

Our conversion may be sudden, or gradual. A resolution of amendment may be suddenly conceived, and firmly maintained; or it may be the result of long and mature reflection.

We may break off our criminal indulgences at once and entirely, or we may advance gradually to the work, by lopping off one after another the offending members. The resolution to attempt the work may rise up in our minds, we know not how; under a concurrence of circumstances, the connexion of which we cannot distinctly trace; or it may be inspired by some remarkable event, by some affecting dispensation of Providence towards ourselves or others. But although the resolution may be suddenly taken and maintained, and the work of conversion not only begun but pursued, we must not, in any case, regard it as at once effected. Criminal desires will move and struggle long after we think that we have destroyed them; like the serpent, that ancient and most apt emblem of vice, whose tail can strike a deadly blow, and his fang inflict the fatal wound, even after the head has been separated from the trunk. The disease may remain in the blood. The appetites and passions, accustomed to flow in one direction, will, with difficulty, be turned and kept in a different channel. The well-known call of temptation will often waken them into life and action, while you imagine that they are sleeping the sleep of death. The descent to vice is easy; it is only floating with the stream, and spreading the sails to the breeze, and allowing the bark to drive where the winds and waves may carry her; but to return is like struggling against wind and tide, where, encountering some whirlpool, the vessel is wrested from your control, or falling within some unexpected current, you are hurried back with impetuous velocity, and night shuts in upon you, weary, exhausted, and disheartened, while the objects around report no progress. The best man's virtue is never secure. Let him, who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall. The rewards of virtue are not to be purchased without toil and conflict. The character cannot be rescued from vice, and formed to the standard of the gospel, without study and labour, prayer and vigilance, and that divine aid which we have ground to hope for in the faithful use of the means of holiness with which God favours us.

The change may be apparent, or in some degree concealed. It may proceed in so open a manner, that you can date its commencement, and trace its course; or in so noiseless and gradual a progress, that its different stages may not be easily distinguished; like a voyage by night, you find yourself at your destined port without being conscious of a change of place. Sometimes you can recollect, when, after a long silence, conscience spake in an audible language to your soul; conviction flashed upon your mind a piercing and inextinguishable light, and, coming suddenly to yourself, you set out at once on the

return to your Father's house. Another is drawn on step by step, by influences operating unseen and unfelt, in various circumstances which he cannot distinctly follow, until the truth has made him free; he no longer groans under the yoke of sin and death, but stands in the liberty of the sons of God.

5. We observe next, that conversion is practicable by every individual to whom it is a duty. Every bad man may cease to do evil; may repent and be converted. Otherwise such persons would never have been called upon to do and to become so. God is too wise, and good, and just, to triumph over the weakness of his creatures, by requiring what is impracticable. But our reason and consciences tell us, that we may break off our sins; that the sensualist and the intemperate may deny their criminal indulgences; that the liar may speak the truth; that the fraudulent may do justly; that the angry man may tame his ferocity; that the profane may use decency of speech; and that the profligate and sacrilegious may learn to venerate and honour religion and its laws. Though the difficulties in the accomplishment of such alterations may be, as they often are, great and disheartening, yet no man ever seriously set about his reformation, and employed with diligence and fidelity the means afforded him by God for its execution, and laboured in the work with steady perseverance, and yet failed of success. The scriptures every where, in their various exhortations to repentance and amendment, imply that we possess this power. Turn ye, turn ye, says the prophet, why will ye die;* what inference is more obvious, than that they might turn themselves, and if they did die in their sins, it was because they would? But do any of us, in a serious expostulation with our consciences, rest satisfied with this plea of inability; do we honestly think that, at the tribunal of God, it will be sufficient for our acquittal to say, that we could not avoid the sins, nor perform the neglected duties, which will then rise up in judgment against us? The apostle, with great force, describes the conflict which must take place in the heart of every man, who would rescue himself from iniquity, when he says, I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. But what is his determination? though all things are lawful for me, yet all things are not expedient, and I will not be brought

* Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.

under the power of any. I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest, having preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

6. We observe next, that there is no necessity for supposing any thing miraculous or supernatural in the conversion of a bad man. God commands us to repent and be converted. Conscience and reflection teach us its propriety and necessity. The means of reclaiming ourselves are afforded, and the motives are continually and strongly urged upon us. Would this have been the case, if the duty required were not within our power? We may ask likewise, what is there in such an event, to which the ordinary means afforded, if properly applied, are not fully adequate?

We often hear that the change is supernatural; that it is the immediate operation of the Spirit of God; and that those persons who are its subjects, know it to be such by their own personal consciousness and feeling. This is the test by which it is ascertained. We do not pretend that such events are impossible. With God all things are possible; and there are conversions recorded in the scriptures, which were certainly miraculous. But we are not to multiply miracles without necessity. We are not to suppose, that a miracle has been wrought in an event, which may be otherwise and easily accounted for. If it can be accomplished only by the irresistible and arbitrary power of God, where is the duty of repentance and conversion?

We doubt not the sincerity of their belief, who profess to have received such communications. We have no distrust of their confidence in what they assert. We would not cast a shadow of reproach on their virtue and piety, for these are often pre-eminent. Yet may they not be deceived? Is there not a general disposition among mankind to rely on what is marvellous and extraordinary? If internal consciousness or experience be a sufficient test, if we are to believe that persons have been the subjects of a miraculous operation, because they say, or are persuaded that they have, then we must admit it in all cases. The sect of Friends, the Swedenborgians, the Calvinists, the Baptists, the Methodists, and innumerable other sects in the church, among all of whom there are many excellent Christians, must, on this subject, receive our confidence. They all maintain the fact of such miraculous operations, and assert their experience of such communications with the fullest persuasion of their reality; and yet, notwithstanding their pretensions to this supernatural influence, they are all of them, in various respects, hostile in sentiment and feeling to

each other. Is God the author of confusion; or of peace, of division, or of unity? Are the influences of the Divine Spirit in one case directly repugnant to what they are in another?

7. Lastly, we would not, by any thing that has been said, be supposed to deny or question the doctrine of divine influences upon the human mind. We truly believe, that more ready than earthly parents to give good gifts to their children, is our Heavenly Father to give his holy spirit to them that ask him. We believe that God is continually operating within and around us; that all the powers of nature are under his control and direction. But at the same time, we cannot believe that it is consistent with human virtue, that the moral influences of his spirit should be irresistible. We are expressly commanded not to grieve, nor to quench his holy spirit. We cannot persuade ourselves, that his gifts are ever arbitrary and wanton, the mere dictates of his caprice, for we look to him as the equal friend of all his creatures, and no respecter of persons. We do not think that they are imparted in a miraculous and supernatural manner, since Jesus himself was not willing to tempt him to work a miracle even for his deliverance. We do not believe that these influences are sensible and apparent, and to be distinguished from the operations of our own minds, because we are expressly told, that as the wind bloweth where it listeth, thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. so is every one that is born of the spirit. We cannot think that they are imparted other than in co-operation with our own exertions, since we are required to ask if we would receive, and to seek if we would find. To him that improves the talents committed to him will more be given; and it is only while we work out our own salvation, that we are to expect God will work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

It is left with every man's conscience to apply these considerations to himself; to examine his own heart and character, manners, conversation, and life, and thus to ascertain how far he fails in his duty; in what respect his christian attainments are defective; what are the pollutions which cleave to his soul, and what the sins and follies which disgrace his life and character. Knowing these, let him view them in their proper colours, and their inevitable consequences. Let him probe deep, and not spare. Humbling himself before God on account of his sins, let him determine to renounce them; to cut off the offending limb, which he cannot restrain; to

* Philippians ii. 12, 13.

apply to the diseased part the means of cure, which God, the Great Physician, proffers to him. Relying on the divine assistance and illumination, let him determine to assert the dignity of his nature and destination; to break off his follies and crimes; to acquire the purity and integrity which belong to the christian character, and to make the will of God the only rule, the glory of God the great end of his life, and the favour of the ever Blessed the supreme object of his ambition. With the psalmist, let him resolve to wash his hands in innocency, and thus approach the altar of God. While he brings there the offering of penitence, and prayer, and virtuous resolutions, and humble trust, let him remember that God delights to show forgiveness. 'The sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit he will not despise; and let him go forth into a world of trial and temptation, with the confident assurance, that no good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly. H.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

GERMAN THEOLOGY.

[At a time when so much is said of German Theology, we are happy to have it in our power to give the following character of it from the Inaugural Discourse of the DEXTER PROFESSOR OF SACRED LITERATURE in Harvard College.]

IN Germany, for the last forty or fifty years, the science of theology has been more cultivated than in any other country; though certainly not altogether with the happiest results. Nobody, I trust, will imagine, that I admire the licentious, and, as it seems to me, the most extravagant and untenable speculations of some of the modern German theologians. In reading their works, I find what I cannot but regard as theories and arguments of impalpable inanity; I seem, like *Æneas* when entering the confines of the dead, to be passing through a region of monstrous shadows, and to be, like him, pursuing a journey,

Quale per incertam Lunam, sub luce maligna,
Est iter in sylvis.

Some of these theologians, who have attained a certain degree of celebrity out of their own country, are, I think, little entitled to any kind of respect. To others of them, I should be dis-

posed to apply the character which Thirlby, in the celebrated dedication of his edition of Justin Martyr, gives of Isaac Vossius, a character which could not be more descriptive of any individual, than it is of a class of writers. "He had great learning, superior genius, and judgment too, which, if not very great, was enough and more than enough for one, who, unless I am entirely deceived, cared but little about discovering the truth upon any subject. He made it his object to seek for and invent new, out of the way, and wonderful opinions in criticism, in philosophy, and in theology. Whether they were true or not, he left to be examined by those who might think themselves interested in the matter."* But this character is far from being applicable to the whole body of modern German theologians. There are many who are not entitled to the praise; and some who are not obnoxious to the censure. Some have executed laborious works of great value; and others have written with much sobriety and good sense, as well as learning and ingenuity. As it respects the mass of those works, with which we can become acquainted only through a knowledge of the German language, their value, without doubt, has been by some considerably overrated; nor would it be safe to recommend the indiscriminate study of them to one apt to estimate the truth of opinions by their novelty. But still the value of many of these works is such, as to render a knowledge of the language very desirable to the theological student, and necessary to a consummate theologian.

DEVOTION.

"True devotion consists not in the stated performance of certain exercises, of which God is the object, but an habit of mind and feeling, answering to the relations, in which we stand to God, as our creator, benefactor, governor, and judge; a state of the affections, produced by frequent meditation on the attributes and character of the Divine Being, and on the connexion between this Being and ourselves, who are his offspring, and lie altogether at his disposal. In a serious and reflecting mind, devotion is at once a powerful, dignified, and pleasurable

* "Erant in eo homine multæ literæ. ingenium excellens, iudicium etiam, si non maximum, at tantum quantum ei satis superque fuit, qui, nisi omnia me fallunt, quid in quavis re verum esset, leviter curavit perspicere. Satis habuit nova, ævia, mirabilia, in critica, in philosophia, in theologia, querere et cogitare: vera anne falsa essent, id vero aliis exquirendum reliquit, qui sua istuc interesse existimarent."

feeling. It cannot rest in a mere casual impulse, or the discharge of a formal duty; it cannot be limited by any boundaries of time or place, but must be an habit of mind, which will accompany us in every circumstance and amidst every occupation. It will 'go with us where we go, and dwell with us where we dwell.' It is not peculiar to the temple or the closet, but is conversant with the ordinary business of the world. It has its favourite scenes and its appropriate exercises; it loves, at proper seasons, to retire from the view of man, and to indulge in silent, solitary contemplation; but it shrinks not from the theatre of active duty, and while it blends itself with the feelings, which arise from the various occurrences of human life, it suggests a prevailing propriety of deportment; improves the relish of every pleasure, and mitigates the severity of every grief. It presents the Deity constantly to view, and teaches those, in whom its true character is formed, to 'live, as seeing Him who is invisible.' "

We are struck with the following sentiment, extracted from a sermon of E. Cogan; and we believe, that the history of the church, fruitful as it has been in dissention and intolerance, will entirely vindicate its truth.

"Men grow furious only for error and absurdity. A concern for virtue has never yet shewn itself in deeds of violence; it has never made any inroads on the peace of society; it has never trampled on the rights of conscience, or wielded the sword of persecution. It may have wept in silence at the corruption and depravity of man; it may have prayed and toiled with earnestness to reclaim it; but it has never burst forth into acts of hostility against even the most corrupt and depraved."

FEAR OF DEATH.

Some of the wisest and best Christians, who have ever lived, have never been able to surmount the fear of death. The thought of quitting all, that they have ever known, of entering upon an untried being, and of appearing in judgment before an holy God, has, at times, filled them with apprehension. This, however, has sometimes been aggravated by constitutional temperament, and not the result merely of philosophical or religious contemplation. It is said of Dr. Johnson, that "he had an awful dread of death." And there is a very

interesting anecdote upon this subject, related of that mighty theologian and most distinguished christian, Bishop Butler. In his last hours he said to his chaplain, "Though I have endeavoured to avoid sin, and to please God to the utmost of my power, yet from the consciousness of perpetual infirmity, I am still afraid to die." "My lord," said the chaplain, "you forget that Jesus Christ is a Saviour." "True," was the answer; "but how shall I know that He is a *Saviour for me?*" "My lord, it is written, 'Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.'" "True," said the Bishop; "and I am surprised that though I have read that scripture a thousand times, I never felt its value till this moment: and now I die happy."

THE BED OF DEATH.

[The following remarks, which are represented as spoken by a dying young woman, are, though found in a work of imagination, worthy of serious attention.]

"WHEN I am dying, do not let the preachers be about me; let me die in private; death is too solemn a thing for witnessings. They might, perhaps, press me on some points, which I could not *then* answer clearly; and the failure of my intellect, the natural decline of my strength, might be mistaken for "unsoundness in the faith." They are fond of proposing *tests* at such a time; it is no time to answer nice questions; one must enjoy their religion then, not define it. If my testimony could be offered up, I would offer it in the presence of the assembled world; but God needs no such witness to his truth. The curtains of a death-bed should be closed: let mine be so, my dearest aunt. Shall I confess the truth to you? I think there is something *too public* in the printed accounts of the deaths of evangelical persons. I do not wish to be surrounded by preachers and persons calling on me to witness the truth, when I have no longer a breath to heave in witness of it. Oh, no, there is something too theatrical in that—

* * "The language of man is as 'the dust of the balance' to me now. Reality, reality is dealing with me. I am on the verge of the grave; and all the wretched distinctions that have kept men at war for centuries seem to me as nothing. I know that 'salvation is of grace through faith,' and, knowing that, I am satisfied. Oh, my dear uncle, I am fast approach-

ing that place where there is neither 'Jew or Greek, Barbarian or Scythian, bondman or free, but Christ is all and in all.' Speak no more of points, which I cannot understand; but feel with me that the religion of Christ is a religion of the soul; that its various denominations (which I have heard so often discussed, and with so little profit) are of light avail, compared with its vital predominance over our hearts and lives. I call," said she, collecting her hollow voice to utter the words strongly—"I call two awful witnesses to my appeal—the hour of death and the day of judgment—they are witnesses against all the souls that live. Oh, my dear uncle, how will you stand their testimony? You have heard much of the language of religion, but I fear you have yet to learn its power."

REVIEW.

ARTICLE XIII.

Letters to the Rev. William E. Channing, containing Remarks on his Sermon recently preached and published at Baltimore. By MOSES STUART, Associate Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover. Second edition, corrected and enlarged. Andover: Flagg & Gould, 1819. pp. 180.

INSTEAD of confining our attention exclusively to Professor Stuart's letters, we have thought that it would be more useful and more satisfactory to our readers, to give a general view of the subject in controversy, with the reasons for our own opinions, without particular reference to his work. A proper review of his letters must be occupied, in great part, in pointing out errors, inconsistencies, and rash and unfounded assertions. All this would serve to distract our attention, and that of our readers, from the real question at issue, to one of very minor importance, the character of Professor Stuart's pamphlet. In the general view which we intend, we shall give a virtual answer at least, or what we regard as an answer, to his statements and arguments, in common with those of other Trinitarians. We propose, then, in the following article, to state what are the doctrines maintained by Trinitarians respecting the nature of God, and the person of Jesus Christ, and our reasons for not believing these doctrines; and to explain our

opinions respecting those passages in scripture, which are urged in their support.

The proper modern doctrine of the Trinity, as it is stated in the creeds of latter times, is, that there are three persons in the Divinity, who equally possess all divine attributes; and this doctrine is at the same time connected with an explicit statement that there is but one God. Now we do not believe this doctrine, because taken in connexion with that of the unity of God, it is a doctrine essentially incredible; one, which no man who has compared the two doctrines together with just conceptions of both, ever did, or ever could believe. Three persons, each equally possessing divine attributes, are three Gods. A person is a being. No one who has any correct notion of the meaning of words will deny this. And the being who possesses divine attributes must be God or a God. The doctrine of the Trinity, then, affirms that there are three Gods. It is affirmed at the same time, that there is but one God. But nobody can believe that there are three Gods, and that there is but one God.

This statement is as plain and obvious as any which can be made. But it certainly is not the less forcible, because it is perfectly plain and obvious. Some Trinitarians have indeed remonstrated against our charging those who hold the doctrine with the "ABSURDITIES consequent upon the language of their creed." We do not answer to this, that if men will talk absurdity, and insist that they are teaching truths of infinite importance, it is unreasonable for them to expect to be understood as meaning something entirely different from what their words express. The true answer is, that these complaints are wholly unfounded, and that the proper doctrine of the Trinity, as it has existed in latter times, is that which is expressed by the language which we have used, taken in its obvious acceptation. There is no reasonable pretence for saying, that *the great body of Trinitarians*, when they have used the word, *person*, have not meant to express proper personality. He who asserts the contrary, asserts a mere extravagance. He closes his eyes upon an obvious fact, and then affirms what he may fancy ought to have been, instead of what there is no doubt really has been. But on this subject we have something more to say, and we shall proceed in a moment to remark particularly, not only upon this, but upon the other evasions which have been resorted to, in order to escape the force of the statement which we have urged.

We wish, however, first to observe, that the ancient doctrine of the Trinity, as it existed before the council of Nice (A.D. 325) was VERY DIFFERENT from the modern, and has this

great advantage over the latter, that when viewed in connexion with the unity of God, it is not *essentially* incredible. The orthodox doctrine, previous to the period just mentioned, taught that the Father alone was the Supreme God; and that the Son and Spirit were distinct beings, deriving their existence from him, and far inferior; each of whom, however, or at least the former, might, in a certain sense, be called God. The subject has been so thoroughly examined, that the correctness of this statement will not, we think, be questioned at the present day by any respectable writer. The theological student, who wishes to see in a small compass the authorities on which it is founded, may consult one or more of the works mentioned in the note below.* We have stated that form of the doctrine which approached nearest to modern orthodoxy. But the subject of the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit, it may be particularly observed, was in a very unsettled state before the council of Constantinople, A.D. 381. Gregory Nazianzen, in his eulogy of Athanasius, has the following passage respecting that great father of Trinitarian orthodoxy. "For when all others who held our doctrine were divided into three classes, the faith of many being unsound respecting the Son, that of still more concerning the Holy Spirit (on which subject to be least impious was thought to be piety) and a small number being sound in both respects; he first and alone, or with a very few, dared to confess in writing, clearly and explicitly, the true doctrine of the one Godhead and nature of the three persons. Thus that truth, a knowledge of which, as far as regards the Son, had been vouchsafed to many of the fathers before, he was finally inspired to maintain in respect to the Holy Spirit."†

So much for the original doctrine of the Trinity. We shall now proceed to state the different forms, which the modern doctrine has been made to assume, and in which its language has been explained, by those who have attempted to conceal or remove the direct opposition between this and the doctrine of the unity of God.

I. Many Trinitarian writers have maintained a modification of the doctrine, *in some respects similar* to what we have just stated to be its most ancient form. They have considered the

* Petavii Dogmata Theologica, Tom. II. de Trinitate; particularly Lib. I. capp. 3, 4, 5.—Huetii Origeniana Lib. II. cap. 2. quæst. 2.—Jackson's edition of Novatian, with his annotations.—Whitby Disquisitiones Modestæ in Cl. Bulli Defensionem Fidei Nicænæ.—Priestley's History of Early Opinions, vol. 2.—General Repository and Review, vol. 3. p. 24. seqq.

† Orat. 21. Op. Tom. I. p. 394.

Father as the "fountain of the divinity," who alone is supreme, and whose existence is underived, and have regarded the Son and Spirit as deriving their existence from him and subordinate to him; but, at the same time, as equally with the Father possessing all divine attributes. With regard to this account of the doctrine, it is an obvious remark, that the existence of the Son, and Spirit, is either *necessary*, or it is *not*. If their existence be necessary, we have then three beings *necessarily existing*, each possessing divine attributes, and consequently we have three Gods. If it be not necessary, but dependent on the will of the Father, then we say that the distance is infinite between underived and independent existence, and derived and dependent; between the supremacy of God, the Father, and the subordination of beings who exist only through his will. In the latter view of the doctrine, therefore, we clearly have but one God; but at the same time the modern doctrine of the Trinity disappears. The form of statement too, just mentioned, must be abandoned; for it can hardly be pretended that these derived and dependent beings possess an equality in divine attributes, or are equal in nature to the Father. Beings, whose existence is dependent on the will of another, cannot be equal in power to the being on whom they are dependent. The doctrine, therefore, however disguised by the mode of statement which we are considering, must, in fact, resolve itself into an assertion of three Gods; or must, on the other hand, amount to nothing more than a form of Unitarianism. In the latter case, however objectionable and unfounded we may think it, it is not to our present purpose to argue against it; and in the former case, it is pressed with all the difficulties which bear upon the doctrine as commonly stated, and at the same time with new difficulties, which affect this particular form of statement. That the Son and the Spirit should exist necessarily, as well as the Father, and possess equally with the Father all divine attributes, and yet be subordinate and inferior to the Father; or in other words, that there should be two beings or persons, each of whom is properly and in the highest sense God, and yet that these two beings or persons should be subordinate and inferior to another being or person, who is God, is as incredible a proposition as the doctrine can involve.

II. Others again, who have chosen to call themselves Trinitarians, profess to understand by the word, *person*, something very different from what it commonly expresses; and regard it as denoting neither any *proper personality*, nor any *real distinction* in the divine nature. They use the word in

a sense equivalent to that which the Latin word *persona* commonly signifies in classic writers; or which we usually express by the word, *character*. According to them, the Deity considered as existing in three different persons, is the Deity considered as sustaining three different characters. Thus some of them regard the three persons as denoting *the three relations* which he bears to men, as their Creator, (the Father,) their Redeemer, (the Son,) and their sanctifier, (the Holy Spirit.) Others found the distinction maintained in the doctrine on three attributes of God, as his goodness, wisdom, and power. Those who explain the Trinity in this manner are called *modal* or *nominal* Trinitarians. Their doctrine, as every one must perceive, is nothing more than simple Unitarianism disguised, if it may be said to be disguised, by a very improper use of language. Yet this doctrine, or rather a heterogeneous mixture of opinions in which this doctrine has predominated, has been, at times, considerably prevalent, and has almost come in competition with the proper doctrine.

III. But there are others, who maintain with those last mentioned, that in the terms employed in stating the doctrine of the Trinity, the word, *person*, is not to be taken in its usual acceptation; but who differ from them in maintaining that these terms ought to be understood as affirming a real threefold distinction in the Godhead. But this is nothing more than a mere evasion introduced into the general statement of the doctrine, for the purpose of rescuing it from the charge of absurdity, to which those who thus express themselves, allow that it would be liable, if the language in which it is usually expressed, were to be understood in its common acceptation. They themselves, however, after giving this general statement, immediately relapse into the common belief. When they speak particularly of the Father, the Son, or the Spirit, they speak of them unequivocally as persons in the proper sense of the word. They attribute to them *personal* attributes. They speak of each as sustaining *personal* relations peculiar to himself, and performing *personal* actions, perfectly distinct from those of either of the others. It was the Son who was SANCTIFIED, and SENT into the world; and the Father by whom he was sanctified and sent. It was the Son who became incarnate, and not the Father. It was the Son who made atonement for the sins of men, and the Father by whom the atonement was received. The Son was in the bosom of the Father, but the Father was not in the bosom of the Son. The Son was the Logos who was with God, but it would sound harsh to say, that the Father was with God. The Son was the first

born of every creature, the image of the Invisible God, and did not desire to retain his equality with [likeness to] God. There is no one who would not be shocked at the thought of applying this language to the Father. Again, it was the Holy Spirit who was sent as the Comforter to our Lord's apostles, after his ascension, and not the Father nor the Son. All this, those who maintain the doctrine of three distinctions, but not of three persons, in the divine nature, must and do say and allow; and therefore they do in fact maintain, with other Trinitarians, that there are three divine persons, in the proper sense of the word, distinguished from each other. Their mode of statement has been adopted merely with a view of avoiding those obvious objections which overwhelm the doctrine as commonly expressed; and without any regard to its consistency with their real opinions, or with indisputable and acknowledged truths. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is an intelligent being, a person. There may seem something like irreverence in the very statement of this truth; but in reasoning respecting the doctrine of the Trinity, we are obliged to state even such truths as this. The Son of God is an intelligent being, a person. And no Christian, one would think, who reflects a moment upon his own belief, can doubt that these two persons are perfectly distinct from each other. Neither of them, therefore, is a mere distinction of the divine nature; or the same intelligent being regarded under different distinctions. Let us consider for a moment what sort of meaning would be forced upon the language of scripture, if, where the Father, and the Son of God are mentioned, you were to substitute the terms, "the first distinction in the Trinity," and "the second distinction in the Trinity," or, "God considered in the first distinction of his nature," and "God considered in the second distinction of his nature." We will not produce any examples, because it would appear to us very much like turning the scriptures into burlesque.

If you prove that the person, who is called the son of God, possesses divine attributes, you prove that there is another divine person beside the Father. In order to complete the Trinity, you must proceed to prove, *first*, THE PERSONALITY, and then the divinity, of the Holy Spirit. This is the only way in which the doctrine can be established. No one can pretend that there is any passage in the scriptures, in which it is expressly taught, that there is a threefold distinction of any sort in the divine nature. He who proves the doctrine of the Trinity from the scriptures, must do it by showing that there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

who are respectively mentioned in the scriptures, as each possessing divine attributes. There is no other medium of proof. There is no other way in which the doctrine can be established. Of course it is the very method of proof to which, in common with other Trinitarians, those resort, who maintain that form of stating the doctrine which we are considering. It follows from this, that their real opinions must be in fact the same with those of other Trinitarians. Indeed to express our own view of the subject, the whole statement appears to us to be little more than a mere oversight, a mistake, into which some have fallen in their haste to escape from the objections which they have perceived might be urged against the common form of the doctrine.

The remarks, which we have made, appear to us plain, and such as may be easily understood by every reader. We have doubted, therefore, whether to add another, the force of which may not be at once perceived, except by those who are a little familiar with metaphysical studies. But as it seems to us to show decisively, that the statement which we are considering is untenable by any proper Trinitarian, we have thought, on the whole, that it might be worth while to subjoin it. In regard to the personality of the divine nature, the only question is, whether there are three persons, or whether there is but one person. Those with whom we are arguing, deny that there are three persons. Consequently they must maintain that there is but one person. They affirm, however, that there is a threefold distinction in the divine nature; that is, in the nature of this one person. But of the nature of any being, we can know nothing but by the attributes or properties of that being. We conceive that this is, at the present day, a fundamental and undisputed principle in metaphysics. Abstract all the attributes or properties of any being, and nothing remains of which you can form even an imagination. These are all which is cognizable by the human mind. When you say, therefore, that there is a threefold distinction in the nature of any being, the only meaning which the words will admit (in relation to the present subject) is, that the attributes or properties of this being may be divided into three distinct classes, which may be considered separately from each other. All, therefore, which is affirmed by the statement of those whom we are opposing is, that the attributes of that **ONE PERSON** who is God, may be divided into three distinct classes; or in other words, that God may be viewed in three different aspects in relation to his attributes. But this is nothing more than a *modal* or *nominal* Trinity, as we have before explained

these terms. Those, therefore, whose opinions we are now considering, we conceive to be *nominal* Trinitarians in their statement of the doctrine, and *real* Trinitarians in their belief; to hold the true doctrine with an implicit acknowledgment in the very statement which they have adopted, that the true doctrine is untenable; and to have involved themselves therefore in new difficulties, without having effected any escape from those with which they were pressed before.

IV. But a very considerable proportion of Trinitarians, and some of them among the most eminent, have not shrunk from understanding the doctrine as affirming the existence of *three equal divine minds*, and consequently, to all common apprehension, of three Gods; and, at the same time, decidedly rejecting the doctrine of the unity of God, in that sense which is at once the popular and philosophical sense of the term. All the unity for which they contend, is only such as may result from these three divinities being inseparably conjoined, and having a mutual consciousness, or a mutual in-being; which last mode of existence is again expressed in the language of technical theology by the terms *perichoresis* or *circumincession*. "To say," says Dr. William Sherlock, "that there are three divine persons, and not three distinct infinite minds, is both heresy and nonsense."* "The distinction of persons cannot be more truly and aptly represented than by the distinction between three men; for [the] Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are as really distinct persons as Peter, James, and John."† "We must allow the Divine persons to be real, substantial beings."‡ There are few names of higher authority among Calvinists than that of Howe. The mode of explaining the doctrine to which he was inclined, is well known. He was disposed to regard the three divine persons, as three "distinct, individual, necessarily existing, spiritual beings," who formed together "the most delicious society."§ Those

* Dr. William Sherlock's *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*. 1690, p. 66.

† *Ibid* p. 105.

‡ *Ibid*. p. 47.

§ Howe's *Calm Discourse of the Trinity in the Godhead*. Works vol. II. p. 537 seqq. particularly pp. 549, 550. This notion of Howe was maintained by the Rev. Dr. S. Worcester in his controversy with Mr. Channing; which controversy, though it attracted some attention at the time, Professor Stuart seems to have entirely forgotten, when he says to Mr. Channing—"After all; the statement which you exhibit of our views is very far from that which we, (or, at least, all Trinitarians with whom I am acquainted,) make of our belief." p. 17. And again: "Most certainly, neither the Nicene Fathers, nor any intelligent Trinitarian, could use the

who give such accounts of the doctrine as we have just stated, may at least claim the merit of having rendered their own opinions in some degree consistent with each other. They have succeeded, at a dear purchase to be sure, in freeing their creed from intrinsic absurdity, and have produced a doctrine to which there is no decisive objection, except that it contradicts the most explicit declarations of scripture, and the first principles of natural religion, and is therefore irreconcilable with all which God has in any way taught us of himself.

Subsequent to the council of Nice, that which we have last considered, became gradually the prevailing form of the doctrine, except that it was not very clearly settled in what the divine unity consisted. The comparison of the three persons in the Trinity to three different men, was borrowed by Sherlock from the fathers of the fourth century. Gregory Nazianzen, who himself maintained zealously this form of orthodoxy, says, that "those who were too orthodox fell into polytheism," i. e. tritheism. It might have been difficult to determine the precise distance from tritheism of those who were not *too* orthodox.

This then is the state of the case. The proper modern doctrine of the Trinity is, when viewed in connexion with that of the unity, a doctrine essentially incredible. In endeavouring to present it in a form in which it may be defended, *one class of Trinitarians* insist strongly upon the supremacy of the Father, and the subordination of the Son and the Spirit. These, on the one hand, must either affirm this distinction in such a manner as really to maintain only a very untenable form of Unitarianism; or, on the other hand, must in fact retain the common doctrine, incumbered with the new and peculiar difficulty, which results from declaring that the Son and Spirit are each properly God, but that each is a subordinate God. *Another class*, the nominal Trinitarians, explain away the doctrine entirely, and leave us nothing with which to contend, but a very unjustifiable use of language. *A third class*, those who maintain three distinctions, and deny three persons, have merely put a forced meaning upon the terms used in its statement; and have then gone on to reason and to write, in a manner which necessarily supposes that these terms are used correctly; and that the common form of the doctrine, which they profess to reject, is really that in which they themselves receive it. And *a fourth class* have fallen into plain and bald

term person in such a latitude as you represent us as doing, and as you attach to it." p. 22. But Professor Stuart's assertions on this subject are, many of them, of a character sufficiently remarkable.

tritheism, maintaining the unity, only by maintaining that the three Gods of whom they speak are inseparably and most intimately united. To these we may add, as a *fifth class*, those, who receive the common doctrine, without any attempt to modify or explain it. All the sects of Trinitarians fall into one or another of the five classes which we have mentioned. Now we may put the nominal Trinitarians out of the question. They have nothing to do with the present controversy. And if there be any, who, calling themselves Trinitarians, do in fact hold such a subordination of the Son and Spirit to the Father, that their doctrine amounts only to one form of Unitarianism, we may put these out of the question likewise. After having done this, we think that it will appear from our preceding statements, that the whole body of real Trinitarians may be separated into two great divisions; viz. those who, in connexion with the divine unity, hold the proper doctrine, either with or without certain modifications,—which modifications, though intended to lessen, would really, if possible, add to its incredibility; and those, who, maintaining the unity only in name, are in fact proper believers in three Gods. Now we cannot adopt the doctrine of those first mentioned, because we cannot believe what appears to us a contradiction in terms; nor the doctrine of those last mentioned, because revelation and reason teach us that there is but one God. If there be any one who does not acquiesce in the conclusion to which we have arrived, we beg him to read over again what we have written, and to satisfy himself, either that there is, or that there is not, some error in our statements and reasonings. The subject is not one with which we are at liberty to trifle, and arbitrarily assume opinions without reason. Our opponents represent the doctrine as of immense importance. We, too, think it of immense importance that the doctrine should be discarded, if it be not true; for we think that it has been a reproach and scandal to the religion of Christians; that it has been one of the principal of those errors which have obscured the truth, and intercepted the influence of the gospel, and which, therefore, have been among the most efficient causes of infidelity, and indifference to our faith.

With the doctrine of the Trinity, is connected that of the *HYPOSTATIC UNION* (as it is called,) or *the doctrine of the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, in such a manner that these two natures constitute but one person.* But this doctrine may be almost said to have preeminence in incredibility to that of the Trinity itself. The latter can be no object of belief when regarded in common with that of the

Divine Unity; for, from these two doctrines, propositions result which directly contradict each other. But the former, without reference to any other doctrine, does in itself, as it seems to us, involve propositions as clearly self-contradictory as any which it is in the power of language to express. It teaches that Christ is both God and man. The proposition is very plain and intelligible. The words, *God* and *man*, are among those which are in most common use, and whose meaning is best defined and understood. There cannot, (as with regard to the terms employed in stating the doctrine of the Trinity,) be any controversy about the sense in which they are used in this proposition, or, in other words, about the ideas which they are intended to express. And we perceive that these ideas are perfectly incompatible with each other. Our idea of God is of an infinite being; our idea of man is of a finite being; and we perceive that the same being cannot be both infinite and finite. We do not know what there is, which is clear in language, or what proposition of any sort, can be affirmed to be true, if we cannot affirm this to be true,—that it is impossible that the same being should be finite and infinite; or, in other words, that it is impossible that the same being should be man and God. To express our own view of the subject, we must say, that if the language we are considering were not so familiar, we believe that there is scarcely any one who would not revolt from the doctrine, as shocking every proper feeling of reverence toward God, and who would not, at the same time, regard it as being as mere an absurdity as can be presented to the understanding. We can conceive of nothing more unmeaning, so far as it is intended to convey any proposition which the mind is capable of receiving, than such language as we sometimes find used, in which Christ is declared to be at once the Creator of the universe, and a man of sorrows; God omniscient and omnipotent, and a feeble man of imperfect knowledge.* Yet it is pretended, that this sort of language may be justified from the scriptures.

We know of no way in which the force of the statement just urged can appear to be evaded, except by a sort of analogy, which has been instituted between the double nature of Christ, as it is called, and the complex constitution of man, as consisting of soul and body. It has been said or implied, that the doctrine of the union of the divine and human natures in

* See Professor Stuart's Letters, p. 48.

Christ does not involve propositions more self-contradictory, than those which result from the complex constitution of man;—that we may, for instance, affirm of man, that he is mortal, and that he is immortal; or of a particular individual, that he is dead, and that he is living: (meaning by the latter term, that he is existing in the world of spirits.) The obvious answer is, that there is no analogy between these propositions and those on which we have remarked. The last mentioned propositions belong to a very numerous class, comprehending all those in which the same term is at once affirmed and denied of the same subject, *the term being used in different senses*; or in which, terms, apparently opposite, are both affirmed of the same subject, *the terms being used in senses not really opposed to each other*. When I say that man is mortal, I mean that his present life will terminate; when I say that he is immortal, I mean, that his existence will not terminate. I use the words in senses not opposed, and bring together no ideas which are incompatible with each other. The second proposition just mentioned is of the same character with the first, and admits, as every one will perceive, of a similar explanation. In order to constitute any analogy between propositions of this sort and those before stated, our opponents must say, that when they affirm that Christ is finite and not finite, omniscient, and not omniscient, they mean to use the words finite and omniscient in different senses in the two parts of each proposition. But this they will not say; nor do the words admit of more than one sense.

A being of a complex constitution like man, is not a being of a double nature. The very term *double nature*, when one professes to use it in a strict, philosophical sense, seems to us to imply an absurdity. The nature of a being is ALL that which constitutes it to be what it is; and when one speaks of a double nature, it appears to us to be the same sort of language, as if he were to speak of a double individuality. With regard to a being of a *complex constitution*, we may, undoubtedly, affirm that of a part of this constitution which is not true of the whole being; as we may affirm of the body of man that it does not think, though we cannot affirm this of man;—or, on the other hand, we may affirm of the being itself what is not true of a part of its constitution, as by reversing the example just given. This is the whole truth relating to the subject. Of a being of a complex constitution, it is as much an absurdity to affirm contradictory propositions as of any other being.

According to those who maintain the doctrine of the two natures in Christ, Christ speaks of himself, and is spoken of by

his apostles, sometimes as man, sometimes as God, and sometimes as both God and man. He speaks, and is spoken of, under these different characters promiscuously, without any explanation, and without its being any where declared, that he existed in these different conditions of being. He prays to that being, whom he himself was. He declares himself to be ignorant of what (being God) he knew, and unable to perform what (being God) he could perform. He affirms that he could do nothing of himself, or by his own power, though he was omnipotent. He, the Supreme God, prays for the glory which he had with God, and declares that another is greater than himself. In one of the passages QUOTED IN PROOF OF HIS DIVINITY, he is called the first born of every creature; in another of these passages, the Supreme God is said to have been anointed by God with the oil of gladness above his fellows; and in a third of them, it is affirmed that he became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. If our readers are shocked by the combinations which we have brought together, we beg them to do us the justice to believe that our feelings are the same with their own. But these combinations necessarily result from the doctrine which we are considering. We might go on to fill page after page with inconsistencies as gross and as glaring. The doctrine has turned the scriptures, as far as they relate to this subject, into a book of riddles, and, what is worse, of riddles which admit of no solution. We willingly refrain from the use of that stronger language, which will occur to many of our readers. And this monstrous doctrine is introduced under the pretence of rendering the scriptures clear and consistent.

We do not then believe the doctrine of the Trinity, nor that of the union of two natures in Christ, because they are doctrines, which, when fairly understood, it is impossible from the nature of the human mind we should believe. They involve, as it seems to us, manifest contradictions, and no man can believe what he perceives to be a contradiction.

We are sometimes accused of opposing reason to revelation, of canvassing and questioning what God has clearly revealed. The charge is utterly unfounded. We are accused of questioning what God has clearly revealed! The charge is not one of depravity, for it is not in human nature to be guilty of impiety of this sort; but it is a charge of mere insanity or idiocy. "When it is God who speaks," says Calvin, "all agree that there is no man of such deplorable audacity, unless indeed he be destitute of common sense, and of humanity itself, as to refuse credit to the speaker." To doctrines which

those who hold them contend make a part of God's revelation, we oppose the true revelation from God, contained in the scriptures, which teaches his Unity, and which teaches that Christ is a distinct being, not God, and consequently, as every other being must be, infinitely inferior to God. In what we have already said we have not been bringing arguments to disprove the doctrines; we have merely been showing that they are intrinsically incapable of any proof whatever; for a contradiction cannot be proved; that they are of such a character, that it is impossible to bring any arguments in their support, and unnecessary to adduce any arguments against them.

Here then we might rest. If we have established this proposition, the controversy is at an end, as far as regards the truth of the doctrines, and as far as it can be carried on against us by any sect of Christians. Till it can be shown that there is some ESSENTIAL mistake in our preceding statements, he who chooses to urge that these doctrines were taught by Christ and his apostles, must do this not as a Christian, but as an unbeliever. If Christ and his apostles communicated a revelation from God, they could make no part of it, for a revelation from God cannot teach absurdities.

But here we have no intention to rest. If we were to do so, we suppose that, notwithstanding what we have said, the old unfounded complaint would be repeated once more, that we oppose reason to revelation; for there are those, who seem unable to comprehend the possibility, that the doctrines of their sect may make no part of the Christian revelation. What pretence then, we ask, is there for asserting that the doctrines, of which we are speaking, are taught in the scriptures? Certainly they are no where *directly* taught. It cannot even be pretended that they are. There is not a passage from one end of the Bible to the other, on which you can by any violence force such a meaning, as to make it affirm the proposition, "that in the Godhead are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory;" or the proposition that Christ was and "continues to be God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever." There was a famous passage in the first Epistle of John, (v. 7.) which was believed to affirm *something like* the first mentioned proposition; but this every man of tolerable learning and fairness, at the present day, acknowledges to be spurious. And now this is gone, there is not one to be discovered of a similar character. There is not a passage to be found in the scriptures, which can be imagined to affirm either of those doctrines which

some have represented as being at the very foundation of Christianity.

What pretence then is there for saying that these doctrines are taught in the scriptures? In answer to this question, our opponents first bring forward a small number of passages, by which they maintain that it may be proved that Christ is God. We say a small number of passages. It has been remarked, that it is of no consequence whether the number of passages be few or many in which a doctrine is clearly taught in the scriptures. Certainly;—in which a doctrine is **CLEARLY** taught. But it is of great consequence, whether the number of passages be few or many, which may bear such an interpretation, that some expressions which they contain shall **APPEAR** to teach a doctrine irreconcilable with the whole tenor and common language of the scriptures. With these passages, which are adduced as arguments for the divinity of Christ, our opponents likewise bring forward some others which are supposed to intimate or prove the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. It cannot but be observed, however, that Trinitarians for the most part give themselves comparatively little trouble about the latter doctrine, and seem to regard it as following almost as a matter of course, if the former be established. Now there is no dispute that the Father is God; and it being thus proved, that the Son and Spirit are each also God, it is *inferred*, not that there are three Gods, which seems to us the proper consequence, but that there are three persons in the Divinity. But Christ having been proved to be God, and it being at the same time regarded by our opponents as certain that he was a man, it is *inferred* also that he was both God and man. The stress of the argument, it thus appears, bears upon the proposition that Christ was God, the second person in the Trinity, the Son.

Without, then, insisting further on the essential character of the two doctrines in question, we will proceed to inquire what the scriptures teach respecting this proposition, that Christ is God, understood in the Trinitarian sense.

I. In the first place we say, *that, putting every other part of scripture out of view, and forgetting all that it teaches us, this proposition is clearly proved to be false by the very passages which are brought in its support.* We have already had occasion to advert to the character of some of these passages, and we shall now remark upon them a little more fully. They are supposed to prove that Christ is the Supreme God, or God in the highest sense, equal to the Father. Let us see what they really prove.

One of them is that in which our Saviour prays: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with that glory which I had with thee before the world was." John xvii. 5.

The being who prayed to God to glorify him, CANNOT be God.

The first verse of John needs particular explanation, and we shall hereafter recur to it again. We will here only observe, that if by the Logos be meant, as Trinitarians suppose, an intelligent being, a person, and not an attribute of God, and this person be Christ, then the person who was WITH God could not have been God, except in that inferior and figurative sense which some Unitarians have supposed.

We proceed to Colossians i. 15., &c. and here, the first words which we find, declare, that the being spoken of is the image of the Invisible God, and the first born of the whole creation. You may take the latter expression in a sense as figurative and remote from its primary meaning as you please; and render it, for instance, chief of the whole creation; but is it possible that any one can believe, that God is affirmed by the apostle to have been the *image* of God; or that such a metaphor as is conveyed by the word *First born*, could have been used by him concerning the Almighty? The word, *First born*, [*πρωτοτοκος*] when used in this metaphorical sense, means as we should expect it to mean from the nature of the metaphor, pre-eminence among beings of the same kind.

Turn now to Philippians ii. 5—8. According to the Trinitarian translation and exposition, Christ (the Supreme God) did not regard his equality with God as an object of solicitous desire, but humbled himself, and submitted to death, even the death of the cross. Can any one imagine that he is to prove to us by such passages as these, that the being to whom they relate is the Invisible and Unchangeable God?

Look at Hebrews i. 8, 9. "Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Do you choose to maintain that this language is used concerning one who possessed essential supreme Divinity? If you bring passages of this sort to *establish* the doctrine, by what use of language, by what possible statements, would you expect it to be *disproved*?

We do not believe that the conclusion of the 5th verse of the 9th chapter of Romans, or the quotation Heb. i. 10. 12. relates to Christ. We conceive that they relate to God, the Father. Laying these for the present out of the question, the passages on which we have remarked are among the principal adduced in support of the doctrine. They stand in the very

first class of proof texts. Let any man put it to his conscience what they do prove.

Again, it is inferred that Christ is God, because it is said, that he will judge the world. To do this, it is said, requires omniscience, and omniscience is the attribute of divinity alone.

We answer, that whatever be meant by the judgment of the world spoken of in the New Testament, St. Paul declares that God will judge the world by A MAN* (not a God) whom HE hath APPOINTED.

Again, it is argued that Christ is God, because supreme dominion is ascribed to him. We do not now inquire what is meant by this supreme dominion; but we answer, that it is nowhere ascribed to him in stronger language than in the following passage. "Then will be the end, when he delivers up the kingdom to God even the Father; when he shall have destroyed all dominion, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. * * * * And when all things are put under him, then will the Son himself be subject to God, who put all things under him, that God may be all in all."†

We do not think that any words can more clearly discriminate Christ from God, and declare his dependence and inferiority; and of necessity his infinite inferiority. We say, as we have said before, infinite inferiority; because an inferior and dependent must be a finite being, and finite and infinite do not admit of comparison.

We do not then believe the doctrine under consideration, because it appears to us to be overthrown by the very arguments which are brought in its support.

II. But further, we do not believe the doctrine, because we are satisfied, that it contradicts the express and reiterated declarations of our Saviour. According to the doctrine in question, it was THE SON, or the second person in the Trinity, who was united to the human nature of Christ. It was HIS words, therefore, that Christ, as a divine teacher, spoke; and it was through HIS power, that he performed his wonderful works. But this is in direct contradiction to the words of Christ. He always refers the divine powers which he exercised, and the divine knowledge which he discovered, to the Father, and never to any other person, or to the Deity considered under any other relation or distinction. Of himself, AS THE SON, he always speaks as of a being entirely dependent upon the Father.

* "A man," so the original should be rendered, not "that man:"
 or *anagoraphos*. Acts xvii. 31. † 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

"The Father loveth the Son, and HATH GIVEN all things into his hand." John iii. 35.

"As the Father hath life in himself, so HATH HE GIVEN to the Son also to have life in himself." John v. 26.

"The works which the Father HATH GIVEN ME TO PERFORM [i. e. hath enabled me to perform] these works which I do, testify of me, that the Father hath SENT me." John v. 36.

"As the living Father sent me, and I LIVE BY THE FATHER, &c." John vi. 57.

"I speak not from myself, but the Father who sent me hath given me commandment what I should enjoin, and what I should teach. * * * Whatsoever therefore I speak, I speak it according to the commandment which the Father hath given me." John xii. 49, 50.

"The doctrine which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me." John xiv. 24.

"If I perform not the works of my Father, believe me not." John xi. 37.

"The words which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father who dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John xiv. 10.

"THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF, but only what he seeth his Father do." John v. 19.

"When ye have set the Son of man on high [i. e. crucified him] then will ye know that I am HE [i. e. the Messiah] and that I do nothing of myself; but speak these things as my Father hath taught me; and that he who sent me is with me." John viii. 28, 29.

We do not multiply passages, because they must be familiar to every one. From the declarations of our Saviour, it appears that he constantly referred the divine power manifested in his miracles, and the divine inspiration by which he spake, to the Father, and not to any other divine person such as Trinitarians suppose. According to their hypothesis, it was the divine power and wisdom of the Son, which were displayed in Jesus; to him therefore should the miracles and doctrine of Jesus have been referred; which they never are. No mention of such a divine person appears in his discourses. But of himself, as the Son of God, he speaks, as of a being perfectly distinct from, and entirely dependent upon his Father and our Father, his God, and our God. These declarations appear to us *decisive* of the controversy. We think that every other argument might be laid aside.

III. But in the third place, we do not believe the doctrine, that Christ is God, *because it is opposed to the whole tenor of scripture, and all the facts in the history of Christ.* Though conceived by a miracle, he was born into the world as other men are, and *such* as other men are. He did not come, as some of the Jews imagined their Messiah would come, no man knew whence.* He was a helpless infant. Will you, at the present day, shock our feelings and understanding to the uttermost, by telling us, that Almighty God was incarnate in this infant, and wrapped in swaddling clothes?† He grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and men. Read over his history in the evangelists, and ask yourselves if you are not reading the history of a man; though of one indeed to whom God had given his spirit without measure, of one whom he had entrusted with miraculous powers, and constituted a messenger of the most important truth. He appears with all the attributes of humanity. He discovers human affections. He is moved even to tears at the grave of his friend Lazarus. He mourns over the calamities about to overwhelm his country. While enduring the agony of crucifixion, he discovers the strength of his filial affection, and consigns his mother to the care of the disciple whom he loved. He was sometimes excited to indignation, and his soul was sometimes troubled by the sufferings which he endured, and which he anticipated. "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause, came I unto this hour."‡ Devotion is the virtue of a created and dependent being. But our Saviour has left us not less an example of piety than of benevolence. His expressions of dependence upon his Father, and upon our Father, are the most absolute and unequivocal. He felt the common wants of our nature, hunger, and thirst and weariness. He was in an agony, and an angel was sent to strengthen him. He suffered death, the common lot of man. He endured the cross, despising the shame, and he did this for THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM.§ Therefore God, even HIS

* "We know whence this man is; whereas when the Christ [the Messiah] cometh, no one knoweth whence he is." John vii. 37.

† Dr. Watts in one of his Hymns says :

This infant is the MIGHTY GOD,
Come to be suckled and adored. B. I. h. 13.

The language is almost too horrible to be quoted.—Dr. Watts was a man of piety and of very considerable intellectual powers. Yet to this extreme point could his mind be debased by a belief of the doctrine against which we are contending.

‡ John xii. 27.

§ Heb. xii. 2.

GOD, hath HIGHLY EXALTED HIM. But it is useless to quote or allude to passages, which prove that Christ was a being distinct from, inferior to, and dependent upon God. You may find them on every page of the New Testament. The proof of this fact is, as we have said, imbedded and ingrained in those very passages, which are brought to support a contrary proposition. But if from your previous associations, or any other cause, it does not clearly appear to you, that those passages themselves have the character which we suppose, you have only to read a little before or a little after, to find the proof of which we speak. It is imagined, for instance, that the third verse of the first chapter of Hebrews proves that Christ is God. Read the next verse. Is it of God that it is said, "he hath been made better than, [become superior to] the angels, having obtained by inheritance, a more excellent name than they?" And is it in reference to God, that the author goes on to prove and illustrate this assertion?

But it is useless to quote passages in proof of our statements, for another reason. All which we contend for is already conceded by our opponents, fully and explicitly. They allow that Christ was a being distinct from, inferior to, and altogether dependent upon God; for they allow, and even contend, that he was a man. "If the evidence," we are told by Professor Stuart, "be not overwhelming, that Christ was perfectly man; I cannot conceive it possible, that any point in theology, or morals, is capable of being established."* "If this be not a fact, I cannot help believing, that we must forever abandon the hope of acquiring the ideas, which the writers of the New Testament design to convey, in any case whatever."† *If this be a fact*, then the only question which need be examined is, whether it be possible for Christ to have been at once God and man, infinite and finite, omniscient and not omniscient, omnipotent and not omnipotent. To our minds, the propositions here supposed, are of the same character, as if one were to say, that, to be sure, astronomers have correctly estimated the size of the earth; but though this is true, it does notwithstanding fill infinite space. Our apprehensions are so narrow and imperfect, that we cannot with our best efforts perceive, that the latter proposition is more an absurdity in terms than those before implied. And we, at least, have such comfortable views of the justice of God, as not to fear that he will make us suffer for defects purely natural, or for not believing propositions, which, from the very constitution of our minds, he has rendered it impossible that we

* Prof. Stuart's Letters, p. 132.

† Ib. p. 134.

should believe. But on this subject we refer to what we have before said.

IV. But in the next place, we do not believe the doctrine in question, because *it is evident from the Scriptures, that none of those effects were produced, which must necessarily have been produced by its first preaching, and subsequent communication.* The apostles and disciples of our Saviour must, at some period, have considered him merely as a man. Such he was to all appearance, and such, therefore, they must have believed him to be. Before he commenced his ministry, his relations and fellow-townsmen certainly regarded him as nothing more than a man. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?"* At some particular period, the communication must have been made by our Saviour to his disciples, that he was not a mere man, but that he was, properly speaking and in the highest sense, God himself. The doctrines with which we are contending, and other doctrines of a similar character, have so obscured and confused the whole of Christianity, that even its historical facts appear to be regarded by many scarcely in the light of real occurrences. But we *may* carry ourselves back in imagination to the time when Christ was on earth, and place ourselves in the situation of the first believers. Let us then reflect for a moment on what would be the state of our own feelings, if some one with whom we had associated as a man, were to declare to us, that he was really God himself. If his character and works had been such as to command any attention to such an assertion, through what an agony of incredulity, and doubt, and amazement, and consternation, must the mind still pass, before it could settle down into a conviction of the truth of his declaration. And when convinced of its truth, with what unspeakable astonishment should we be overwhelmed. With what extreme awe, and entire prostration of every faculty, should we approach and contemplate such a being; if indeed man, in his present tenement of clay, could endure such intercourse with his maker. With what a strong and unrelaxing grasp would the idea seize upon our minds to the exclusion of almost every other. How continually would it be expressed in the most forcible language whenever we had occasion to speak of him. What a deep and indelible colouring would it give to every thought and sentiment, in the remotest degree connected with an agent so mysterious and so awful. But we perceive nothing of this

* Mark, vi. 3.

state of mind in the disciples of our Saviour ; but a great deal which gives evidence of a very different state of mind. You may read over the three first evangelists, and it must be by a more than ordinary exercise of ingenuity, if you discover what may pass for an argument, that either the writers, or the numerous individuals of whom they speak, regarded our Saviour as their Maker and God ; or that he ever assumed this character. The same is true of a majority of the epistles. Can you believe, that if such a most extraordinary communication, as we have supposed, had ever actually been made, no particular record of its circumstances, and immediate effects, would have been preserved ? that the evangelists in their accounts of their master would have omitted the most remarkable event in his history ? and that three of them at least (for so much must be conceded to us) would have made no direct mention of by far the most astonishing fact in relation to his character ? Read over the accounts of the conduct and conversation of his disciples with their master, and put it to your own feelings, whether they ever thought that they were conversing with their God ? Read over these accounts attentively, and ask yourselves, if this supposition does not appear to you one of the most incongruous that ever entered the human mind ? Take only the facts and conversation, which occurred the night before our Saviour's crucifixion, as related by St. John. Did even Judas believe that he was betraying his God ? Their master washed the feet of his apostles. Did the apostles believe—but the question is too shocking to be stated in plain words. Did they then believe their master to be God, when, surprized at his taking notice of an inquiry which they wished to make, but which they had not in fact proposed,* they thus addressed him ? “ Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and that there is no need for any man to question thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God.”† Could they imagine, that he, who, throughout his conversation, spoke of himself only as the minister of God, and who in their presence prayed to God, was himself the Almighty ? Did they believe that it was the maker of Heaven and Earth whom they were deserting, when they left him upon his apprehension ? But there is hardly a fact or conversation recorded in the history of our Saviour's ministry, which may not afford ground for such questions as we have proposed. He who maintains, that the first disciples of our Saviour did

* See John xvi. 17—19.

† John xvi. 30.

ever really believe that they were in the immediate presence of their God, must, one would think, maintain at the same time, that they were a class of men by themselves, and that their whole feelings and conduct were immeasurably and inconceivably different, from what those of any other human beings would have been, under the same belief. But beside the entire absence of that state of mind, which must have been produced by this belief, there are other continual indications, direct and indirect, of their opinions and feelings respecting their master, perfectly irreconcilable, as it seems to us, with the supposition of its existence during any period of his ministry, or their own. Throughout the New-Testament we find nothing which implies, that such a most extraordinary change of feeling ever took place in the disciples of Christ, as must have been produced by the communication, that their master was God himself upon earth. No where do we find the expressions of those irresistible and absorbing sentiments, which must have possessed their minds under the conviction of this fact. With this conviction, in what terms, for instance, would they have spoken of his crucifixion, and of the circumstances with which it was attended? The power of language would have sunk under them in the attempt to express their feelings. Their words, when they approached the subject, would have been little more than a thrilling cry of horror and indignation. On this subject, they did indeed feel most deeply, and as *we*, with our belief, should expect them to feel. But do you think that St. Peter regarded his master as God incarnate, when he thus addressed the Jews by whom Christ had just been crucified? "Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth proved unto you to be a man from God by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know, him delivered up by the determined will and foreknowledge of God, ye have crucified and slain by the hands of ungodly men. Him hath God raised to life."*

But what we have stated are not the only consequences which must necessarily have followed from the communication of the doctrine in question. It cannot be denied by those who hold this doctrine, in connexion with the doctrine of the Trinity, that however satisfactorily it may be explained, and however well it may be reconciled with that fundamental principle of religion, to which the Jews were so strongly attached, the doctrine of the Unity of God, yet that it does or may at

* Acts ii. 22—24.

first sight appear somewhat inconsistent with it. From the time of the Jew who disputed with Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, to the present period, it has always been regarded by the unbelieving Jews with abhorrence. They have represented the Christians as no better than idolaters ; as denying the first truth of religion. But the unbelieving Jews, in the time of the apostles, opposed Christianity with the utmost bitterness, and passion. They sought on every side for objections to it. There was much in its character to which the believing Jews could hardly be reconciled. The Epistles are full of statements, explanations, and controversy, relating to questions having their origin in Jewish prejudices and passions. But with regard to this doctrine, which, if it had ever been taught, the believing Jews must have received with the utmost difficulty, and to which the unbelieving Jews would have manifested the most determined opposition—with regard to this doctrine, there is no trace of any controversy. "The sacred writers," says Professor Stuart, "do not appear to me to write as controversialists, on the subject of Christ's divinity."* But if it had ever really been taught, it must have been the main point of attack and defence between those who assailed, and those who supported Christianity. There is nothing ever said in its explanation. But it must have required, far more than any other doctrine, to be explained, illustrated, and enforced ; for it appears not only irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Unity of God ; but equally so with that of the humanity of our Saviour ; and yet both these doctrines, it seems, were to be maintained in connexion with it. It must have been necessary, therefore, to state it as clearly as possible, to exhibit it in its relations, and carefully to guard against the misapprehensions to which it is so liable on every side. Especially must care have been taken to prevent the gross mistakes into which the Gentile converts from polytheism were likely to fall. Yet so far from any such clearness of statement, and fulness of explanation, the whole language of the New Testament in relation to this subject is, (as we have before said) a series of ænigmas, upon the supposition of the truth of the doctrine. "The sacred writers," says Professor Stuart, "*appear not to take the least pains to separate the two natures in any thing which they say of either. They every where speak of Christ, (it appears to me so) as either human or divine, or both. They do not seem to apprehend any danger of mistake in regard to the subject.*"† We

* Letters, p. 128.

† Letters, p. 85.

believe with Professor Stuart, that they never did apprehend any danger of mistake in regard to the subject. But if they had actually taught the doctrine in the manner which he supposes, we must say, that this want of apprehension would have been to the last degree astonishing and unaccountable.—The doctrine, then, is never defended in the New Testament, though unquestionably it would have been the main object of attack, and the main difficulty in the Christian system. It is never explained, though no doctrine could have been so much in need of explanation. On the contrary, upon the supposition of its truth, the apostles express themselves in such a manner, that if it had been their purpose to darken and perplex the subject, they could not have done it more effectually. And still further, this doctrine is never insisted upon as a necessary article of faith; though it is now represented by its defenders as lying at the foundation of Christianity. With a few exceptions, the passages in which it is imagined to be taught, are introduced incidentally, the attention of the writer being principally directed to some other topic; or they can be regarded only as accidental notices. In the three first gospels, and in the greater part of the epistles, no supposed mention can be found of it, capable, as it seems to us, of being moulded into a plausible argument. It appears, then, that while other questions of far less difficulty, (for instance, the circumcision of the Gentile converts,) were subjects of such doubt and controversy, that even the authority of the apostles was barely sufficient to establish the truth, this doctrine, so extraordinary, so obnoxious, and so hard to be understood, was introduced in silence, and received without any hesitation, dislike, opposition, or misapprehension. There are not many propositions, to be proved or disproved merely by moral evidence, which would appear to us more incredible.

We wish to repeat some of the ideas already suggested in a little different connexion. The doctrine, that Christ was God himself, appearing upon earth to make atonement for the sins of men, is represented by those who maintain it, as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, affecting essentially the whole character of our religion. If true, it must, indeed, have affected essentially the whole character of the writings of the New Testament. A truth of such awful and tremendous interest, a fact, “at which reason stands aghast, and faith herself is half confounded,”* a doctrine, so adapted to seize upon and

* Such is the language of Bishop Hurd in defending the doctrine. “In this awfully stupendous manner, at which REASON STANDS AGHAST, AND FAITH HERSELF IS HALF CONFOUNDED, was the grace of God to man at length manifested.” *Sermons* vol. ii. p. 289. London, 1785.

possess the imagination and the feelings, and at once so necessary and so difficult to be understood, must have appeared every where in the New Testament, in the most prominent relief. Nobody, one would think, can seriously imagine it any answer to this remark, to say, that "the Apostles doubtless expected to be believed when they had *once* plainly asserted any thing;"* and to insinuate, that their veracity might have been suspected, if they had made frequent and confident asseverations of the truth of the doctrine.† What was the business of the Apostles, but to teach and explain, to enforce and defend, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity? We say to *defend* these doctrines; for he who reads the epistles with any attention, will not, we believe, think that the authority of an apostle was in every case quite so decisive in bearing down at once all error, and doubt, and opposition, as it is represented to have been in the remarks just quoted. But from the very nature of the human mind, if their minds at all resembled those of other men, the fact that their master was the Almighty, clothed in flesh, must have appeared continually in their writings, in direct assertions, in allusions, in the strongest possible expressions of feeling, in a thousand different forms. The intrinsic difficulty of the doctrine in question is so great, and such was the ignorance of the first converts, and their narrowness of conception, that it is one, to which the apostles must have continually recurred, for the purpose of explaining it, and guarding it against misapprehension. As a fundamental doctrine of our religion, it is one which they must have been constantly employed in teaching. If it were a doctrine of Christianity, the evidence for it would burst from every part of the New Testament, in a blaze of light. Do you think that we should be left to collect the proof of a fundamental article of our faith, and the evidence of incomparably the most astonishing fact that ever occurred upon our earth, from some expres-

* Prof. Stuart's Letters, p. 128.

† "The Apostles doubtless expected to be believed, when they had *once* plainly asserted any thing. That they are not, is indeed to be lamented: but it cannot be charged to their fault. They felt, (what we feel now,) that very frequent, strong, and direct asseverations of any thing are apt to produce a suspicion in the minds of a hearer or reader, that the person making them has not arguments on which he relies, and so substitutes confident affirmations in their room; or that he is himself but imperfectly satisfied with the cause which he defends; or that he has sinister motives in view. For myself, I confess I am inclined to suspect a man of all these, who makes very frequent and confident asseverations." Prof. Stuart's Letters, p. 128.

sions scattered here and there, the greater part of them being dropt incidentally ; and that really one of the most plausible arguments for it would be found in the omission of the Greek article in four or five texts ? Do you think, that such a doctrine would have been so taught, that putting out of view the passages above referred to, the whole remaining body of the New Testament, the whole history of our Saviour, and the prevailing and almost uniform language of his apostles should appear, at least, to be thoroughly irreconcilable with it ? We speak, it will be remembered, merely of the proposition, that Christ was God. With regard to the doctrine of his double nature, or the doctrine of the Trinity, it cannot, as we have said, be pretended that either of these is any where directly taught. The whole character of the New Testament, of the gospels and of the epistles, seems to us entirely different from what it must have been, if the doctrines maintained by Trinitarians are true. To our minds, it is incredible, that they should not, if true, have appeared in the scriptures in a form essentially different from that, in which alone, it can be pretended that they do at present.

Here we close our argument from scripture ; though no one acquainted with the controversy will suppose that we have exhausted the subject. Among other assertions equally unfounded, it has been said, that we support our opinions by perverted ingenuity, by introducing incorrect principles of interpretation, by looking out for various readings, and by rash and hazardous criticisms. We have shown how we support our opinions. They rest, as it seem to us, upon a broad and deep foundation ; not upon a few difficult passages, found here and there, but upon the clear, prevailing sense of the whole of the New Testament. Our learning, when applied at all to the criticism of the New Testament in relation to this subject, is applied, as we think, only to remove error and misconception. Our opinions are those, which we think an unlettered man of plain good sense, and unprejudiced mind, must receive from his common reading of the scriptures. But if any one choose to rest his faith upon the particular passages adduced by our opponents, it certainly becomes him to be well satisfied that these passages are correctly interpreted and understood ; and it seems to us unreasonable to suppose that this state of mind can be fairly attained without some familiarity with the art of criticism, and some acquaintance with the Greek language. We give one meaning to those passages, and our opponents give another. Upon what ground shall any one positively decide, that the latter is right, and the former is wrong, without having himself investigated their meaning ; except upon the obvious, and, we

think, perfectly satisfactory ground, which at once presents itself, the CLEAR SENSE OF THE REST OF SCRIPTURE. With regard to Philippians ii. 5—8, Professor Stuart says, that ‘*after laborious examination*’ he is ‘*persuaded that the Greek of this passage not only admits, but demands*’ a Trinitarian rendering; and ‘*that a fair examination of μορφῇ [the word translated form, in the phrase form of God] either generally, or in special relation to the passage before us, will end in the conviction, that the word is not unfrequently synonymous with φύσις (nature) and οὐσία (being).*’ It is through a similar process that every one should pass in order to be satisfied, whether correctly or not, that this text and others may bear and were intended to express a Trinitarian meaning. It appears in Professor Stuart’s book how the Trinitarian doctrine must be defended. Supposing that any one be unable to judge for himself of the correctness of his statements, translations, and criticisms (and many of them appear to us altogether incorrect) what course is it then proper for him to adopt? What is he to do, who has neither leisure nor critical skill for a ‘*laborious examination*’ of the passages adduced by Trinitarians? Is he to believe blindly such a doctrine as that of the Trinity, receiving it merely upon the authority of some Trinitarian critic? We think not. But there is one course which he may pursue, that seems to us perfectly safe and satisfactory. He may rest his faith upon the plain, undisputed, indisputable meaning of almost the whole of the New Testament. No interpretation of the passages in question CAN BE correct, which contradicts the common language of our Saviour and his apostles. He may make the clear, prevailing sense of scripture his rule, by which to judge of the true sense either of these, or of any other disputed passages. There can be no better rule either for the learned or the unlearned. Having adopted this principle of judgment, he will find, that critics, inferior to none in ability, learning and fairness, have explained these passages in such a manner, that they present no difficulty when compared with the rest of scripture; and that there is no reason therefore that they should occasion him any anxiety or doubt. He will find, for instance, with regard to the passage just adverted to, those who will tell him, what he might be very apt to suspect beforehand, that the *form of God* does not mean the *nature* or *being* of God, any more than the *form of a servant*, in the same passage, means the *nature* or *being* of a servant.

Some of our opponents insist, in language which seems to us extremely presumptuous, that if we reject their doctrines, we must also reject the scriptures, and give up our Christian faith.

They are not very scrupulous in refraining from the use of those somewhat dishonourable weapons of warfare, insinuations and charges of real or virtual infidelity. We value Christianity quite as much as they can do; and we feel compelled to say, that we think we understand its real value much better than they do. We believe its divine origin in the highest and strongest possible sense of the words, quite as firmly as they can; and we think we perceive the intrinsic divinity of its character with incomparably more clearness, than it can be discerned by those, who, as it seems to us, have mistaken some of the grossest and worst errors of men for essential doctrines of the religion of God. Whether Christianity must share the fate of the doctrines against which we are contending; and whether we, or those who maintain these doctrines, hold opinions opposite to the clear and decided testimony of revelation, are questions which, we think, the preceding statements afford some means of determining. They are questions of very serious importance; and let every man make it a matter of conscience to decide them according to the best of his ability.

If there is not some essential error in our preceding statements and reasonings, it is clear that the doctrine of the Trinity was not taught by Christ and his apostles, either directly or by implication. Whence then was it derived? In answer to this question, we have something more, and something very material to say. Reason and scripture have borne their testimony against it; and we are now about to call another witness, Ecclesiastical history.

In the next place, then, *we do not believe this doctrine, because we can trace its history, and show its origin, in a very different source from the Christian revelation.* We distinctly trace its origin to the Platonic philosophy, which was the popular and prevalent philosophy during the first ages, subsequent to the introduction of Christianity; and of which all the more eminent Christian writers, the fathers, as they are called, were, in a greater or less degree, disciples. They, as others have often done, blended their philosophy and their religion into one complex and heterogeneous system; and taught the doctrines of the former as those of the latter. In this manner, they introduced gross errors into the popular faith. The facts which we have stated are not to be denied. They are proved by the most satisfactory evidence; and are affirmed or acknowledged by writers who hold the most opposite opinions upon other subjects. "It is an old complaint of learned men," says Mosheim, "that the *fathers*, or teachers

of the ancient church, were too much inclined to the philosophy of Plato, and rashly confounded what was taught by that philosopher with the doctrines of Christ, our Saviour; in consequence of which, the religion of Heaven was greatly corrupted, and the truth much obscured.”* This passage is from the Dissertation of Mosheim, concerning the injury done to the church by the later Platonists. In the same dissertation, after stating some of the obstructions thrown in the way of Christianity, by those of the later Platonists, who were its enemies, he proceeds to say: “But these evils were only external, and although they were injurious to our most holy religion, and delayed its progress, yet did not corrupt its very nature, and disease, if I may so speak, its vitals. More fatal distempers afflicted Christianity, after this philosophy had entered the very limits of the sacred city; and had built a habitation for herself in the minds of those to whom the business of instruction was committed. There is nothing, the most sacred in our faith, which from that time was not profaned, and did not lose a great part of its original and natural form.”† “Few of the learned,” he adds in another place, “are so unacquainted with ecclesiastical history, as to be ignorant what a great number of errors, and most preposterous opinions, flowed in from this impure fountain.”‡ Among the false doctrines thus introduced from the Platonic philosophy, is to be reckoned, we believe, preeminently that of the Trinity. Gibbon says, with a sneer, that “the Athenian sage [Plato] marvellously anticipated one of the most surprising discoveries of the Christian revelation.” It is not here the place to inquire, how far the doctrines of Plato himself, respecting the divinity, coincided with those afterwards maintained by his followers; but there is no question that the doctrine of the Trinity was a favourite doctrine of the later Platonists, equally of those who were not Christians, as of those who were. Both the one and the other class expressed the doctrine in similar terms, explained it in a similar manner, and defended it, as far as the nature of the case allowed, by similar arguments; and both appealed in its support to the authority of Plato. Clement of Alexandria, one of the earliest of the Trinitarian and Platonizing fathers, (he flourished in the first part of the third century) endeavours to show, that the doctrine was taught by that philosopher. Among other passages, he quotes one from the *Timæus* of Plato, in which mention is made of a second and third principle, beside the ‘King of all things.’ In this

* Mosheim, *De turbata per recentiores Platonicos Ecclesia*, Commentatio, § vi.

† Ibid. § xxxiii.

‡ Ibid. § xlvi.

passage, he observes, he "can understand nothing to be meant but the Sacred Trinity; the third principle being the Holy Spirit, and the second principle being the Son, by whom all things were created according to the will of the Father."* Two hundred years after Clement, Augustin tells us in his Confessions, that he found the true doctrine concerning the Logos in a Latin translation of some Platonic writings, which the providence of God had thrown in his way.† In his time Christianity was so assimilated to Platonism, that Augustin, speaking of those ancient philosophers, who were particularly admired by the later Platonists, says: "If these men could revive, and live over again their lives with us, with the change of a few words and sentences, they would become Christians, as very many Platonists of our own time have done."‡ Basnage had good reason for observing, that the fathers almost made of Plato a Christian, before the introduction of Christianity. Immediately after this remark, Basnage quotes a writer of the fifth century, who expresses with honest zeal his admiration at the supposed fact, that the Athenian sage should have so marvellously anticipated the most mysterious doctrines of revelation.§

We will produce a few passages from modern *Trinitarian* writers, to show the near resemblance between the Christian and Platonic Trinity. The very learned Cudworth, in his great work on the Intellectual System, has brought together all that antiquity could furnish to illustrate the doctrine. He institutes a long and minute comparison between the form in which it was held by the Heathen Platonists, and that in which it was held by the Christian fathers. Toward the conclusion of this, we find the following passages:

"Thus have we given a true and full account, how, according to Athanasius, the three divine hypostases, though not *monoousious*, but *homoousious* only, are really but one God or Divinity. In all which doctrine of his, there is nothing but what a true and genuine Platonist would readily subscribe to."||

"As the Platonic Pagans, after Christianity did approve of the Christian doctrine concerning the Logos, as that which

* Stromat: v. Opp. p. 598. Sylburg: p. 710. Potter.

† Tu, Domine—procurasti mihi—quosdam Platonicorum libros, &c. Opp. T. I. c. 128. Basil, 1556.

‡ Lib. de vera religione. Opp. T. I. c. 704.

§ Basnage, Histoire des Juifs. Liv. iv. ch. iv. § 20.

|| P. 620 of the folio. London, 1678.

was exactly agreeable with their own; so did the generality of the Christian fathers before and after the Nicene council, represent the genuine Platonic Trinity as really the same thing with the Christian, or as approaching so near to it, that they differed chiefly in circumstances, or the manner of expression."*

In proof of this, Cudworth produces many passages similar to those which we have quoted from Clement of Alexandria, and Augustin. Athanasius, he observes, 'sends the Arians to school to the Platonists.'†

Basnage was not disposed to allow such a resemblance between the Christian and Platonic trinity, as that which Cudworth maintains, and has written expressly in refutation of the latter. It is not necessary to enter into this controversy. The sentence with which he concludes his two chapters‡ on the subject, is enough for our purpose. "Christianity, in its triumph, has often reflected honour on the Platonists; and as the Christians took some pride in finding the Trinity taught by a philosopher, so the Platonists were proud in their turn to see the Christians adopt their principles."

There has been no more noted defender of the doctrine in modern times, than Bishop Horsley. The following is a quotation from his letters to Dr. Priestley :

"I am very sensible, that the Platonizers of the second century were the orthodox of that age. I have not denied this. On the contrary, I have endeavoured to show that their Platonism brings no imputation upon their orthodoxy. The advocates of the Catholic faith in modern times have been too apt to take alarm at the charge of Platonism. I rejoice and glory in the opprobrium. I not only confess, but I maintain, not a perfect agreement, but such a similitude, as speaks a common origin, and affords an argument in confirmation of the Catholic doctrine [of the Trinity] from its conformity to the most ancient and universal traditions."§

In another place he says : "It must be acknowledged, that the first converts from the Platonic school took advantage of the resemblance between the Evangelic and Platonic doctrine on the subject of the Godhead, to apply the principles of their old philosophy to the explication and confirmation of the articles of their faith. They defended it by arguments drawn

* Page 621. † Page 623. ‡ Histoire des Juifs. Liv. iv. ch. iii. iv.

§ Letters to Dr. Priestley, Letter 12.

from Platonic principles, and even propounded it in Platonic language."*

We might produce many more authorities in support of the facts which we have stated. But we conceive it wholly unnecessary. The fair inference from all these facts, every reader, we conceive, is able to draw for himself. The doctrine of the Trinity is not a doctrine of Christ and his apostles, but a fiction of the school of the latter Platonists, introduced into our religion by the early fathers, who were admirers and disciples of the philosophy taught in this school. The want of all mention of it in the scriptures is abundantly compensated by the ample space which it occupies in the writings of the heathen Platonists, and of the Platonizing fathers.

But what we have stated is not the only evidence which Ecclesiastical history affords against this doctrine. The conclusion to which we have just arrived is confirmed by other facts, to some of which we have already adverted, and others of which we can now barely mention; by the facts of *its gradual introduction; of its slow growth to its present form; of the strong opposition which it encountered; and of its tardy reception among the great body of common Christians.*†

We have thus given an account of the reasons, why we do not believe the doctrines held by Trinitarians, respecting the nature of God, and the person of Jesus Christ. It is rare, it seems to us, that any popular error is so assailable and vulnerable on every side. We shall not recapitulate what we have written. We have endeavoured to express ourselves as concisely as possible. If any one should think our arguments of force; but yet not be fully satisfied of their correctness, it will be but the labour of an hour or two, to read them over again. The time will be well spent, if it should contribute toward freeing his belief from an essential error; and giving him clearer, juster, and consequently more honourable views of Christianity. It will be well spent, even if he should merely be led to think more correctly of a large portion of his fellow Christians, to perceive that they are not fair objects of all those outrages which have been directed against them; and that they have not adopted their opinions through any want of reverence for the scriptures.

* Charge iv. § 2. published in Horsley's Tracts in controversy with Dr. Priestley.

† On these subjects, see Dr. Priestley's History of Early Opinions respecting the person of Christ.

We proceed now to remark upon the passages adduced by Trinitarians in support of their opinions, and upon the proper mode of interpreting these passages. What we have already said requires no familiar acquaintance with the science of theology, in order to be readily apprehended. It is addressed to the plain good sense of every intelligent reader. The arguments which we have used, with the exception, perhaps, of our account of the origin of the doctrine, are such, that those who are, and those who are not familiar with theological studies, may be equally competent to judge of their correctness. But in what we have to say respecting the interpretation of these passages, we must occupy somewhat different ground, and enter the confines of critical learning. We shall endeavour, and we hope not without success, to be as clear as possible; but the subject necessarily involves statements, remarks, reasonings, and criticisms of such a character, that they may not be apprehended with perfect ease; nor their force and correctness at once perceived, by one altogether unacquainted with these studies. Before, however, entering on the main question respecting the proper mode of interpreting these passages, we shall premise two or three general remarks.

We have already, we conceive, furnished some *direct* answer to the argument founded upon these passages. We have done this, if there be any truth in the remark which we have made, that these passages alone afford sufficient materials for disproving the main doctrine which they are brought to support, the doctrine that Christ is God. We think, as we have said, that a large proportion of them contain language, which cannot be used concerning God, which necessarily distinguishes Christ from God, and which clearly represents him as an inferior and dependent being.

We wish to recal another remark to the recollection of our readers. It is, that the doctrines maintained by Trinitarians, upon the supposition of their truth must have been taught in the scriptures, in a manner very different from what it can be pretended, that they are. Let any one recollect that neither the doctrine of the Trinity, nor that concerning the double nature of Christ are any where *directly* taught; and then let him look over the passages which are brought to prove the proposition, that Christ is God; let him consider how they are collected from one place and another, and how thinly they are found scattered through the New Testament; let him observe that in a majority of the books of the New Testament, there are none on which a prudent reasoner would choose to

rely; and then let him remember the general tenor of the Christian scriptures, and the undisputed meaning of far the greater part of their language in relation to this subject. Having done this, we think he may safely say, before any critical examination of the meaning of these passages, that their meaning must have been mistaken; that the evidence adduced appears altogether defective *in its general aspect*; and that it is not by such detached passages as these, taken in a sense opposed to the general tenor of scripture, that a doctrine like that in question can be established. We might, it seems to us, almost as reasonably attempt to prove, in opposition to the daily witness of the heavens, that there are three suns instead of but one, by building an argument on the accounts which we have of *parhelia*.

Another remark of some importance is, that, as Trinitarians differ much in their accounts of the doctrine, so are they not well agreed in their manner of defending it. When the doctrine was first introduced, it was defended as Bishop Horsley tells us, "by arguments drawn from Platonic principles." To say nothing of these, some of the favorite arguments from scripture of the ancient fathers, were such as no Trinitarian at the present day would choose to insist upon. One of those, for instance, which was adduced to prove the Trinity, is found in Ecclesiastes, iv. 12. "A threefold cord is not soon broken." Not a few of the fathers, says Whitby, explain this concerning the Holy Trinity.* Another passage often adduced, and among others by Athanasius, as declarative of the generation of the Son from the substance of the Father, was discovered in the first verse of the 43d Psalm. The argument founded upon this, disappears altogether in our common version, which renders: "My heart is inditing a good matter." But the word in the Septuagint, corresponding to *matter* in the common version, is *Logos*; and the fathers understood the passage thus: My heart is throwing out a good *Logos*.† A proof, that the second person in the Trinity became incarnate, was found in Proverbs ix. 1. "Wisdom hath builded her house;"‡ for the second person, or the Son, was regarded in the theology of the times as the Wisdom of the Father. These are merely specimens taken from among many of a similar character, a number more of which may be found in the work of Whitby just referred to in our notes. Since the first

* Whitby *Dissertatio de Scripturarum Interpretatione secundum Patrum Commentarios*, pp. 95, 96.

† *Ib.* p. 75.

‡ *Ib.* p. 92.

introduction of the doctrine, the mode of its defence has been continually changing. As more just notions respecting the criticism and interpretation of the scriptures have slowly made their way, one passage after another has been dropped from the Trinitarian roll. Some, which are retained by one expositor, are given up by another. Professor Stuart has expressly abandoned one or two which have been commonly among those first quoted, and has neglected to bring forward others. But this procedure is not peculiar to him. Even two centuries ago, Calvin threw away, or depreciated the value of many texts, which most Trinitarians would think hardly to be spared. There are, we believe, not many of much importance in the controversy, the orthodox exposition of which has not been given up by some one or more of the principal Trinitarian critics among Protestants. Among the Catholics, there are many by whom it is rather affirmed than conceded, that the doctrine of the Trinity is not to be proved from the scriptures, but rests for its support upon the *tradition of the church*.

But these remarks are merely preliminary. We now proceed to our main purpose in this part of the article, which is to show in what manner the passages adduced by Trinitarians are to be regarded and understood, *so far as these passages may in fact appear to favour their doctrines*.

The state of the case then, as far as it regards the interpretation of these passages, we conceive to be this. Our opponents quote certain texts, and explain them in a meaning which, regarding only some particular expressions in these texts, goes to support their opinions. We explain the same texts in a very different meaning; and believe our sense to be the true one. The words, considered in themselves, will perhaps bear either meaning, that of our opponents, as well as our own. We will at least concede, for the sake of argument, that this is the case. In what manner, then, are we to decide which meaning is the true one? How are we to determine, whether the meaning in which we explain any passage, or that which is put upon it by our opponents, is the sense which was intended by the writer?

In order to answer these questions, we must enter into a little explanation, concerning the nature of language, and the principles of its interpretation. The art of interpretation derives its origin from the *intrinsic ambiguity of language*. What we mean to express by this term, is the fact, that a very large proportion of sentences, *considered in themselves, merely in respect to the words of which they are composed*, are capable of expressing not one meaning only, but two or more different

meanings; or, (to state this fact in other terms) that in very many cases, the same sentence, like the same single word, may be used to express very different senses. Now, in a great part of what we find written concerning the interpretation of language, and in a large proportion of the specimens of criticism which we meet with, especially upon the scriptures, this fundamental truth, this fact, which lies at the very bottom of the art of interpretation, has been entirely overlooked, or at least not regarded in its relations and consequences. We will illustrate it by a single example. St. John thus addresses the Christians, to whom he was writing, in his first epistle, ii. 20.

"Ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and know all things."

If we consider these words in themselves merely, we shall perceive how uncertain is their signification, and how many different meanings, they may be used to express. The first clause, 'Ye have an anointing from the Holy One,' may signify,

1. *Through the favour of God, ye have become Christians, or believers in Christ:* anointing being a ceremony of consecration, and Christians being considered as consecrated and set apart from the rest of mankind.

2. Or it may mean, *Ye have been truly sanctified in heart and life:* a figure borrowed from outward consecration being used to denote inward holiness.

3. Or, *Ye have been endued with miraculous powers:* consecrated as prophets and teachers in the Christian community.

4. Or, *Ye have been well instructed in the truths of Christianity.**

We forbear to mention other meanings, which the words might be used to express. These are sufficient for our purpose.

The term, *Holy One*, in such a relation as it holds to the other words in the present sentence, may denote either God, or Christ, or some other being.

Ye know all things literally expresses the meaning, *Ye have the attribute of omniscience.* Beside this meaning, it may signify, *Ye are fully acquainted with all the objects of human knowledge;* or, *Ye know every truth connected with Christianity;* or, *Ye have all the knowledge necessary to form your faith, and direct your conduct;* or the proposition may require some other limitation, for *all things* is one of those terms, the meaning of which is continually to be restrained and

* See Wetstein's notes on this passage, and on 1 Tim. iv. 7.

modified by a regard to the subject present to the mind of the writer.

This statement may afford some imperfect notion of the various senses which these words may be used to express; and of the uncertainty which must exist about their meaning, when they are regarded without reference to those considerations by which their meaning ought to be determined. We say, imperfect, because we have really kept one very important consideration in mind, that they were written by an apostle to a Christian community. Putting this out of view, it would not be easy to fix the limit of their possible meanings. It must be remembered, that we have adduced this passage merely by way of illustration; and that if it were necessary an indefinite number of similar examples might be quoted.

We will mention, and we can barely mention, some of the principal causes of the intrinsic ambiguity of language. I. Almost every word is used in a variety of senses; and some words in a great variety. Now as you assign one or another of these senses to different words in a sentence, you change the meaning of the whole sentence. If they are important words, and the different senses which you assign vary much from each other, you change its meaning essentially. II. But beside their common significations, words may be used in an undefined number of figurative senses. A large proportion of sentences may, therefore, be understood either figuratively or literally. Considered in themselves, they present no intrinsic character that may enable us to determine whether they are literal or figurative. They may often be understood in more than one literal, and in more than one figurative sense; and a choice is then to be made among all these different senses. III. A very large proportion of sentences which are not what rhetoricians call figurative, are yet not to be understood strictly, not to the letter, but with some limitation, and often with a limitation which contracts exceedingly their literal meaning; with some exception, or some modification of one sort or another, which does not appear in the words of the sentence. "I do not," says Mr. Burke, addressing the friend to whom he is writing, in his *Reflections on the French Revolution*, "I do not conceive you to be of that sophistical, capacious spirit, or of that uncandid dullness, as to require for every general observation or sentiment, an explicit detail of the correctives and exceptions, which reason will presume to be included in all the general propositions which come from a reasonable man." Sentences which are general or universal in their terms, are often to be regarded in relation to the subject

about which they are employed, or the persons to whom they were addressed; and their meaning is often to be greatly limited by a regard to one or another of these considerations. IV. In eloquence, in poetry, in popular writing of every sort, and not least in the scriptures, a great part of the language used is the language of emotion or feeling. The strict and literal meaning of this language is, of course, a meaning which the words may be used to express; but this is rarely their true meaning. The language of feeling is very different from that of philosophical accuracy. The mind, when strongly excited, delights in general unlimited propositions, in hyperboles, in bold figures of every sort, in forcible statements addressed indirectly to the understanding through the medium of the imagination, and in the expression of those temporary false judgments which are the natural result, and consequently among the most natural expressions, of strong emotion. If any one supposes that language of this sort is to be understood to the letter, he will fall into gross mistakes. Different senses in which it may be understood often present themselves; and it is sometimes not easy to determine which to adopt.

These are *some* of the principal causes from which the intrinsic ambiguity of language proceeds; or, as we may say in other terms, these are some of the principal modes in which this ambiguity manifests itself. But a full analysis of the subject, accompanied by proper examples, would fill more pages than we mean to occupy by the present article, long as it may be. From what we have already said, the truth of the fact which we are maintaining, will, we think, appear, at least sufficiently for our present purpose.

It is, then, to the intrinsic ambiguity of language, that the art of interpretation owes its origin. If words and sentences were capable of expressing but a single meaning, no art would be required in their interpretation. It would be, as a late writer,* thoroughly ignorant of the subject, supposes, a work to be performed merely with the assistance of a lexicon and grammar. The object of the art of interpretation is to enable us to solve the difficulties presented by the intrinsic ambiguity of language. It first teaches us to perceive the different meanings which any sentence may be used to express, as the different words of which it is composed are taken respectively in one sense or another; as it is understood literally, or figuratively; strictly and to the letter, or popularly and in a modifi-

* Dr Thomas Chalmers. See the conclusion of his work on the Evidences of Christianity.

ed sense ; as the language of emotion, or as a calm and unimpassioned expression of thoughts and sentiments ; and it then teaches us, which is its ultimate purpose, to distinguish among *possible* meanings, the *actual* meaning of the sentence, or that meaning which, in the particular case we are considering, was intended by the author. And in what manner does it enable us to do this ? Here again a full and particular answer to this question is not to be comprized in the compass of a few pages. The general answer is, that it enables us to do this *by directing our attention to all those considerations which may render it probable, that one meaning was intended by the writer rather than another.*

Some of these considerations are, the character of the writer, his habits of thinking and feeling, his common style of expression, his settled opinions and belief, the extent of his knowledge, the general state of things in which he lived, the particular local and temporary circumstances present to his mind while writing, the character and condition of those for whom he wrote, the opinions of others to which he had reference, the connexion of the sentence, or the train of thought by which it is preceded and followed, and, finally, the manner in which he was understood by those for whom he wrote, a consideration, the importance of which varies with circumstances. The considerations to be attended to by an interpreter, are here reduced to their elements. We cannot dwell long enough upon the subject, to point out any of the different forms and combinations in which they may appear. But where the words which compose a sentence are such, that the sentence may be used to express more than one meaning, its true meaning is to be determined SOLELY by a reference to EXTRINSIC CONSIDERATIONS, such as we have stated. In the case supposed (a case of very frequent occurrence) all that we can learn from the mere words of the sentence, is the different meanings which the sentence is capable of expressing. It is obvious that the words, considered in themselves, can afford no assistance in determining which of these different meanings was that *intended by the author*. This problem is to be solved solely by a process of reasoning, founded upon such considerations as we have stated.*

* Upon the subject of the interpretation of language, with particular reference to the criticism of the scriptures, the author of the present article hopes, at some future time, to explain the facts and principles here stated much more fully in a separate work. The best treatise on the subject, with which he is acquainted, is contained in the first volume of Le Clerc's *Ars Critica*. It is only one of Le Clerc's titles to praise, that

We will illustrate this account of the principles of interpretation by an example of their application.

Of MILTON, Dr. Johnson says, that

"He had considered creation in its whole extent, and his descriptions are therefore learned."

"But he could not be always in other worlds, he must sometimes return to earth, and talk of things visible and known."

Addison tells us, that "he knew *all* the arts of affecting the mind."

Bentley, in the preface to his edition of the *Paradise Lost*, speaks of him thus:

"He could expatiate at large through the compass of the whole universe; and through all Heaven beyond it, could survey all periods of time from before the creation to the consummation of all things."

"Milton's strong pinion now not Heaven can bound," are the words of Pope.

He passed, says Gray, the flaming bounds of space and time, and saw the living throne of God.

In the age subsequent to his own, "he continued," says Aikin, "to stand alone, an insulated form of unrivalled greatness."

he was a very clear minded and acute philologist. Our knowledge of the art of interpretation, considered in respect to its general principles, has been little advanced since the time when he wrote.

In regard to the philosophy of the art, the German expositors, whom Professor Stuart mentions near the conclusion of his pamphlet, have done little or nothing with which we are acquainted. Some of them are undoubtedly very good verbal critics, and well acquainted with many of the subsidiary branches of learning necessary in explaining the scriptures. But as expositors of the New Testament, we estimate the worth of the infidel theologians of Germany,—that class of which Professor Stuart particularly speaks—as being much less, than what that gentleman is disposed to ascribe to them. Beside that we do not think very highly of their judgment and good sense; they are entirely defective in the most essential particular necessary to qualify them for the work. Upon the principles of interpretation which we have laid down, it is apparent that in order to explain the New Testament correctly, *it is necessary to have just notions of the intellectual and moral character of our Saviour and his apostles, and of the circumstances under which they spoke or wrote.* But the theologians to whom we refer, entertain opinions on these subjects which appear to us entirely incorrect. In consequence, the general style of interpretation which has been adopted by some German critics, as Paulus for instance, seems to us to the last degree extravagant and absurd. For many particular expositions, we might in vain seek for a parallel since the time of the Fathers; unless we were to make an exception in favour of what may be found in the commentaries of some orthodox divines. Indeed there seems to us a little inconsistency in Professor Stuart's celebrating these men as among the most admirable of critics, and at the same time producing such extraordinary specimens as he does of the result of their labours.

Why do we not understand all this language strictly and to the letter? Why, without a moment's hesitation, do we put upon the expressions of all these different authors, a sense so very remote from that which their words are adapted to convey, when viewed independently of any extrinsic considerations by which they may be explained? The answer is, because we are satisfied (no matter how) that all these writers believed Milton to be a man, and one not endued with supernatural powers. This consideration determines us at once to regard their language as figurative, or as requiring very great limitation of its strict meaning.

Let us attend to another example of the application of those principles which have been laid down. Our Saviour says, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die;"* and similar declarations, as every one must remember, were often repeated by him. We recollect to have met with a passage in an infidel writer, in which it was maintained that these declarations were to be understood literally; and that Christ meant to assure his disciples that they should not suffer the common lot of man. Why do we not understand them literally? Because we are satisfied that our Saviour's character was such, that he would not predict a falsehood. We think too, an infidel might easily satisfy himself, that his character was such, that he would not predict what the next day's experience might prove to be a falsehood.

We will give one more example: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."† He who will turn to the context of the passage, may see that this declaration is repeated and insisted upon by our Saviour, in a variety of phrases and in different relations. The Roman Catholics understand this passage, when viewed in connexion with the words used in instituting our Lord's supper, as a decisive argument for the doctrine of transubstantiation. If either doctrine were capable of proof, we should certainly think that there was no passage in scripture, which went so far to prove the doctrine of the Trinity, as this does to prove the doctrine of transubstantiation. Why then do we not understand the words in the sense of the Roman Catholics? Why do we suppose a figure so bold, and to our ears so harsh, as we are compelled to suppose, if we do not understand them literally? Solely because we have such notions of the character and doctrines of our Saviour, that we are satisfied that he would not teach any thing irrational or absurd; and that the declaration

* John xi. 26.

† John vi. 53.

in question would be very irrational, if understood literally without reference to the doctrine of transubstantiation; and altogether absurd, if supposed to imply the truth of this doctrine. It is upon the same principle, that we interpret a very large proportion of all the figurative language which we meet with. We at once reject the literal meaning of the words, and understand them as figurative, because if we did not do this, they would convey some meaning which contradicts common sense; and it would be inconsistent with our notions of the character of the writer, to suppose him to intend such a meaning. But this principle, which is adopted unconsciously in the interpretation of all other writings, has been grossly disregarded and contemned in the interpretation of scripture. If one should interpret any other writings (except those in the exact sciences) in the same manner in which the scriptures have been explained, he might find as many absurdities in the former, as there are pretended mysteries in the latter.

Upon the principle just stated, we may reject the literal meaning of a passage, even where we cannot pronounce with confidence, what is its true meaning. The words of our Saviour just quoted, are an example in point. One may be fully justified in rejecting their literal meaning, who is wholly unable to determine their true meaning. To do this is certainly no easy matter. Similar difficulties, that is, passages about the true meaning of which we can feel no confidence, though we may confidently reject some particular meaning which the words will bear, are to be found in all other ancient writings as well as the scriptures.

If the facts and principles respecting interpretation which we have stated are correct, any one who will examine what has been written concerning this subject, may perceive how little it has been understood by a large proportion of those who have undertaken to lay down rules of exposition, and how much it has been involved in obscurity and error. There are many writers, who appear neither to have had any distinct conception of the truth, that sentences are continually occurring, which may severally express very different senses, *when we attend only to the words of which they are composed*; nor, of consequence, any just notions of the manner in which the meaning of such sentences is to be determined. Yet, it is to such sentences that the art of interpretation is particularly applicable; and its main purpose is, to teach us in what manner their ambiguity may be resolved.

With regard to the passages adduced in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, they have been interpreted, we conceive,

upon no general principles, or upon none which can be at all defended. But the same is true of these, as of other passages in scripture. Many readers have been taught from their childhood to associate a certain meaning with certain words and texts in the Bible. This meaning, borrowed from the schools of technical theology, may be altogether erroneous, but it is that which immediately presents itself to their minds. They can hardly avoid considering those expositions of particular passages with which they are so familiar, as the only ones which would occur to an unprejudiced reader. He who would break those associations which they have between certain words and a certain meaning, and substitute the true sense instead of that to which they have been accustomed, appears to them to be doing violence to the language of scripture. We make these remarks, merely for the sake of showing, that the *strong impression*, which some may feel respecting the meaning of different passages, being the result merely of education and habit, and not founded upon any correct principles of judgment, is of no sort of weight in the present controversy.

We may now, then, proceed to answer the question formerly proposed. Certain passages are adduced by Trinitarians, and explained in one sense; we explain the same passages in a different sense. The question is, in what manner it shall be decided which explanation is true, or which is most probable? Now, upon the supposition that the words will bear either meaning, this is a question, which, as we have shown, is to be determined solely by extrinsic considerations; and all those considerations, which we have urged in the former part of the article, bear directly upon the point at issue. Our purpose has been to prove, that the doctrines of Trinitarians were not taught by Christ and his apostles. In so far as we have rendered this probable, we have rendered it probable, that they were not taught by them in any particular passage. All the considerations which we have brought forward, are such as apply directly to the interpretation of every passage which may be adduced. But these considerations are in our minds of so much weight, as to render it certain, that the Trinitarian exposition of every genuine passage of the New Testament is false. Their force can be avoided only in one way, not by proving, positively, that the words will bear a Trinitarian meaning—for we have, all along, for the sake of argument, gone upon this supposition—but by proving, negatively, that it is impossible they should have been used in any other than a Trinitarian meaning;—that the words will bear but one sense, and that this is the only sense, which they could have been

intended to express. The latter proposition, when thus stated in express terms, no one, we think, acquainted with criticism, will undertake to maintain in respect to these passages in general, or in respect to any particular passage. If it should be advanced, it may easily be shown to be wholly untenable. But if this be true, and if there be not some gross error in our preceding reasonings, then the controversy, with regard to the Trinitarian exposition of these passages, is already decided. Whatever may be their true sense, the Trinitarian exposition must be false.

It does not indeed follow from this, that the particular meaning, which we, or any Unitarian expositor may assign to a passage, is its true meaning. Because one meaning that has been assigned is certainly false, we cannot conclude that another, which the words will bear, must be that which the author intended. Whether it be, or be not, is to be determined by the general considerations just adverted to, together with such other particular considerations, as may specially apply to the passage before us. With regard to some one or more of these passages, a student of the scriptures may, perhaps, hesitate between different Unitarian expositions, without perceiving any sufficient reasons to decide his choice. The case is the same with regard to many other passages of scripture, in examining which we may discover different probable meanings, but cannot confidently determine the true meaning. But however much he may be perplexed in determining the true sense of a passage, this will be no reason for adopting one which may be proved not to be the true sense. He would reason very ill, who, because he could not satisfy himself as to what was meant by our Saviour, when he spoke of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, should adopt on that account the Roman Catholic exposition of his words. If there be any texts adduced by Trinitarians, concerning the true meaning of which the student of the controversy can obtain no satisfaction, he may recollect that these are not the only difficult passages in scripture; that one must have studied with very little, or very great attention, who does not recognize many of a similar character; and that we must not give up what we know, because there is something which we do not know; or sacrifice the clear explicit tenor of all the rest of scripture to the possible meaning of some texts which appear to contradict it.

But in all this reasoning, we have gone upon a very liberal supposition, when we have conceded generally that the passages adduced by Trinitarians will BEAR a Trinitarian sense. Of many of these passages, as we have formerly shown, this

supposition is not true. They contain declarations and expressions, on which no meaning can be put, which is not altogether inconsistent, as it seems to us, with the doctrines they are brought to establish. Some of the passages last referred to, do, indeed, at the same time, contain other expressions, which, considered alone, admit a sense favourable to the Trinitarian doctrine that Christ is God; and there are a few texts which will bear such a meaning throughout. We shall not undertake to give a general explanation of them, for they have already been often explained, and the Unitarian expositions may be found in books sufficiently common. But we shall endeavour to afford some assistance to our readers, who are not familiar with the controversy, by stating several heads or classes, to which we think the proofs from scripture, which have been principally urged by Trinitarians in modern times, may be referred; and under each head, shall remark upon one or two texts which have been most insisted upon, or which may seem to present most difficulty.

I. To the first class, we may refer *interpolated or corrupted passages*. Such as Acts xx. 28, where in the common version we find these words: "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Instead of "the church of God," the true reading is "the church of the Lord." 1 Tim. iii. 10. "God was manifest in the flesh;" where instead of *Θεος* (God,) the true reading is either *ὃς* (which,) or *ὁ* (who, or he who.) And the famous text of the *three heavenly witnesses*, 1 John v. 7. This text was formerly considered as the strong hold of the Trinitarian system. The value attached to it, as a proof passage, may be estimated from the obstinacy with which it was long retained, so that it even now keeps its place in the editions of the common version; from the lingering glances which are still cast toward it by such writers as Middleton;* from the pertinacity with which the more ignorant class of controversialists continue to quote it; and from the ill will which is manifested toward Griesbach, on account of his having freed the text of his New Testament from this interpolation, and the other corruptions which we have mentioned.

II. *Passages relating to Christ which have been mis-translated*. To this class belongs Phil. ii. 5. seqq. Here the common version makes the apostle say of Christ, that he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." This has

* The author of the Doctrine of the Greek Article. See his note on the text.

been considered as a decisive argument, that Christ is God; though it seems, at first sight, a mere absurdity, to say of any being, that "he thought it not robbery to be equal with himself." Perhaps no text, however, has been more frequently quoted, or referred to.* It is now conceded that the passage is incorrectly rendered. But Professor Stuart, though he allows this, still thinks the text of too much value to be given up; and by retaining a part of the old mistranslation (supposing *ισα* to denote *equality*, instead of *likeness*) and substituting a new one instead of that which is lost (understanding *μορφη* to mean *being* or *nature*†) he has contrived to press it again into service. The exact verbal rendering of *εν μορφη Θεου* is "*in the form of God*," and of *εν μορφη δουλε*, "*in the form of a servant*." But as neither of these phrases correspond to our common modes of expression, they can hardly convey any distinct meaning to most readers. In a translation of the passage, it would be better therefore to substitute equivalent, but more intelligible phrases. The following translation, we believe, fully conveys the sense of the original.

"Let the same dispositions [of humility and benevolence] be in you which were in Jesus Christ; who being the image of God, did not think his likeness to God, a thing to be eagerly retained, but lowered himself, and took the appearance of a ser-

* Thus Dr. Watts says in one of his hymns (B. II. h. 51.)

Yet there is one of human frame,
Jesus arrayed in flesh and blood,
Thinks it no robbery to claim
A full equality with God.

Their glory shines with equal beams, &c.

† In his translation of the passage, Professor Stuart indeed renders this word, "*condition*;" but as he afterward (p. 96) insists, in reference to this passage, that it means "*nature*" or "*being*," we suppose he must consider the word, *condition* as synonymous with the two latter. This is not quite conformable to common usage. and with regard to this particular passage, there has been a wide distinction made between them. Elsner (in his *Observationes Sacrae*) after observing, that the Socinians with Grotius and Le Clerc understand *μορφη* in this passage to mean nothing more than *condition*, under takes to show, in opposition to them, that it means *nature, essence, internal form*.

After examining the authorities quoted by Elsner and Schlensner, we are not quite satisfied that *μορφη* ever has this latter meaning in profane writers. But we are fully satisfied, that it never has this meaning in the Greek of the Septuagint and New Testament. If such were the case, we should only have to choose between this and its more common meaning.

ισος is used sometimes to denote *equality*, and sometimes *likeness*. The reasons which determine us to adopt the latter signification in the present passage, are sufficiently obvious.

vant, and became like men;* and being† in the common condition of a man, he humbled himself, and submitted to death, even the death of the cross."

We believe, that the original passage affords no more proof of the Trinity, than the translation which we have just given. Christ was in the form of God, or was the image of God, on account of the authority delegated to him as the messenger of God to men, the divine power committed to him of performing miracles; and because as an instructor he spoke in the name of God, as he was taught by God. Yet notwithstanding he bore this high character, he was not eager to assume it for the sake of any personal distinction, rank, or splendour, or to obtain any other personal gratification. He lowered himself to the condition of common men; lived in similar circumstances to theirs, and submitted to similar deprivations, and sufferings. When it is affirmed, that he took the appearance of a servant, these words are illustrated by what is said by our Saviour himself, in inculcating, like the apostle, the virtue of humility, with the same reference, as is here made, to his own example: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." It is in imitation of this example, that he directs him who would be greatest among his disciples, to become the servant of all.

To the class of mistranslated passages, are, we think, likewise to be referred several, where, in the common version, mention is made of "*calling on the name of Christ.*" Of these the following may serve as a specimen:

1 Cor. i. 2. "Unto the church of God, which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, *with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

Of the last words, we believe, that one or the other of the following renderings is correct:—

With all who in every place take upon themselves the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Or, *With all who in every place are called by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The words will bear either rendering; and it is not worth while to discuss in this place which is most probable. *To be called by the name of a person*, in the sense of belonging to, or being devoted to that person, is a phrase of common occur-

* Literally, "*becoming in the likeness of men:*" a Hebraism.

† *Eugenus* equivalent to *on*; according to a well known use of *εὐενομίας*.

rence in the scriptures. Similar passages to that just quoted are to be explained in a similar manner.

Under this head, are likewise to be placed those passages, which, on account of the omission of the Greek article, have been so translated as to apply to Christ the title of God. These we believe to be correctly rendered in the common version.*

III. *Passages relating to God which have been incorrectly applied to Christ.* Under this head we place the conclusion of Rom. ix. 5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."

The last clause, we believe, is improperly referred to Christ. The words may be pointed, and rendered in the following manner:—

"And of whom was Christ according to the flesh.† May he who is over all, God, be blessed forever."

The objection to this explanation and rendering is, that in other similar expressions in scripture, the word, Blessed, always commences the sentence, as is common in English. The answer to this is, that it is to God as the author and head of the Jewish dispensation, as over all those things just mentioned, that St. Paul utters this expression of devout acknowledgement; and that the reference to God, *considered under this particular character*, would be lost by any different arrangement of the words. If the word answering to *Blessed* were to commence the sentence, the effect in the Greek would be the same as in the following rendering of what would then be the arrangement; *blessed be God who is over all, forever and ever*; which would be a mere general ascription of praise to God, as presiding over the universe; and not a particular expression of gratitude to him, as the author and head of the Jewish dispensation.‡

* The able tract of the Rev. Calvin Winstanley, containing a satisfactory defence of the common rendering, will shortly be republished, being now in the press of Hilliard and Metcalf, Cambridge.

† That is "*by natural descent.*" With regard to this phrase, concerning which a difficulty has been raised, see its use in the third verse of this chapter; "my kinsmen according to the flesh," i. e. by natural relationship; and in the 8th verse, "the children according to the flesh," i. e. by natural descent. Observe likewise the very common uses of the phrase elsewhere.

‡ We may observe that the mode of constructing the passage given above, is not that on which Professor Stuart particularly remarks, and which he attributes to a Professor Justi, though it was long ago proposed by Locke.

But there is another mode of understanding the passage, which is not liable to any objection on the ground of an unusual construction. It is well known, that the present pointing of the New Testament is of no authority, a fact indeed which we have just implied. Let any one now turn to the passage in his Greek Testament, and put a dot at the top of the line (equivalent to a colon or semicolon) after *σακε*, and a comma after *παντων*, and he will perceive that the following meaning immediately results.

"He who is (or was) over all is God blessed forever."

In commenting on this passage, Professor Stuart has taken what he says about "Greek usage" from Middleton's note upon the text, in his work concerning the Greek Article; and has, at the same time, fallen into a considerable mistake from not rightly apprehending what he found in that author. In consequence of some slight obscurity in the manner in which Middleton expresses himself, Professor Stuart has been led to believe, that Wetstein proposed a conjectural reading of the words in question, for the sake of avoiding the Trinitarian sense, and he thus writes in consequence:

"Wetstein's conjecture, that it should be read *ὁ αὐτ., ὁ ἐπὶ παντὸν Θεός*, is not any more fortunate. Such a mode of expression, as *ὁ αὐτ. ὁ*, all relating to the same subject, is repugnant to Greek usage. Besides, this conjecture, like that of Schlichting, not only violates the integrity of the text, but assigns the article to *Θεός*, and omits it before *εὐλογητός*; which is surely inadmissible."—*Stuart's Letters*, p. 79.

The case is extremely different from what Professor Stuart supposes. Wetstein offers no conjecture upon the verse. What he says is, that "if St. Paul had meant to express the sense which some [i. e. the orthodox] suppose, he would rather have written *ὁ αὐτ. ὁ ἐπὶ παντὸν*," &c. &c. Wetstein gives certain words, which he thinks St. Paul would have used if he had intended to express himself, as Trinitarians suppose that he does; and Professor Stuart believes these words a conjecture, made for the purpose of avoiding the Trinitarian exposition. We do not comprehend what meaning he imagined that they would bear, when he wrote under this impression.

With Wetstein's New Testament, which Professor Stuart thus quotes at second hand, and quotes incorrectly, a professed theological critic should have been better acquainted. Of this work, Bishop Marsh says, in one of his controversial tracts, "Every man, who is at all conversant with philological inquiries, knows that Wetstein's notes to the Greek Testament contain a very copious collection of passages from Greek authors, made in order to illustrate the meaning of words in the Greek Testament; and that when a question arises about the meaning of a word in the Greek Testament, it is as usual to recur to the examples collected by Wetstein, as it is to the examples in Johnson's Dictionary, when the meaning of an English word is disputed." Illustrations of his hypothesis, &c. Appendix, sect. II.

We should not have been tempted to make these and some other of our remarks, if it had not appeared to us, that there was in Professor Stuart's pamphlet a little too much ostentation of learning; and if he had not in

"He who is over all," that is, over all which has just been mentioned. The rapidity of expression in the original, however, is not fully represented by such a rendering, because in our language we are obliged to supply the ellipsis of the substantive verb. It may be imitated, however, by employing the participle instead of the verb; and translating thus:—

"Who are Israelites, whose was the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of the temple, and the promises, whose were the fathers, and of whom was Christ according to the flesh; he who was over all, being God blessed forever."*

This conclusion, as every one must perceive, is in the highest degree proper and natural. Among the privileges and distinctions of the Jews, it could not be forgotten by the apostle that God had presided over all their concerns in a particular manner. With regard to the ellipsis of the substantive verb, which we have supposed, nothing is more common. In the five verses, including the verse we are considering (between the 3d and 9th) it occurs at least six times.

Many Trinitarian writers have been disposed to imply at least, very strongly, that the words, according to the common idiom of the Greek language, necessarily demand a Trinitarian rendering and exposition.† We think we have shown this pretence to be wholly unfounded. But we happen to have it in our power to give what appears to us a perfectly decisive answer to it of a different kind. The opinions of the early orthodox fathers, were such (as we have before stated) that they could not, and never did, even when most desirous of elevating his character, apply to Christ the title of "God over

fact appealed to the extent of his studies, as a presumption in favour of the correctness of his opinions, intimating at the same time, that those of Mr. Channing had been much more limited. See pp. 120, 121. "My sole business these ten years past has been the study of the Bible."—"I have limited my study to no one class of writers."—"From writers of the Unitarian class, I have received with gratitude much instruction relative to the philology, the exegesis, and the literary history of the scriptures."—"The reasoning of Athanasius and Augustine I can peruse with great pleasure," &c.

* We believe that the verbs in this passage should be in the past time, and have accordingly so given them in the translation above, though before, in conformity to the common rendering, we have employed the present; but this is a point which does not effect the question at issue.

† Thus Professor Stuart says of the only Unitarian exposition on which he remarks at length, "that Greek usage by no possibility admits of it;" leaving his reader to infer, that Greek usage by no possibility admits of any Unitarian exposition.

all." On the contrary, some of their number have expressly denied that this title belongs to him. It was applied to him by the Sabellians, and was considered as a distinguishing mark of their heresy. There is no one of the fathers more eminent than Origen. "Supposing," says Origen in his work against Celsus, "that some among the multitude of believers, likely as they are to have differences of opinion, rashly suppose that the Saviour is God over all; yet we do not, for we believe him when he said, 'The Father who sent me is greater than I.'"* After the Nicene council, this title began to be applied. Yet, subsequent to this time, Eusebius, in writing against Marcellus, says: "As Marcellus thinks, He who was born of the holy virgin, and clothed in flesh, who dwelt among men, and suffered what had been foretold, and died for our sins, was the very God over all; for daring to say which, the church of God numbered Sabellius among atheists and blasphemers."† Now it is incredible that the text in question should have been overlooked. But the early fathers in making these, and a multitude of other similar declarations, concerning the inferiority of the Son to the Father, never advert to it. The conclusion is irresistible, either that the text did not exist in their copies in its present form, a conclusion which we are very far from being disposed to maintain; or, that they found no difficulty in explaining it in a similar manner to that in which we understand it. It would be a rather bold step for the sake of saving the Trinitarian exposition, to charge the Greek fathers with ignorance of the idiom of their own language.

We pass to Hebrews i. 10—12. It is unnecessary to give the words at length. This passage, we believe, belongs to the present class. The words, as we think, were originally addressed by the Psalmist (Ps. cii. 25.) not to Christ, but to God, and are so addressed by the author of the Epistle.‡

* Origen. cont. Cels. VIII. p. 387. See Wetstein.

† Euseb. Eccles. Theol. ii. 4. This and the passage from Origen are given by Wetstein in his critical remarks on the text, with other authorities to the same purpose. See also Whitby Disquisitiones Modestæ, *passim*, but particularly pp. 26, 27. p. 122. and p. 197. Ed. Secund.—For placing a period after *oagna*, Griesbach quotes the authority of "many fathers who denied that Christ could be called 'God over all.'"

‡ The following are the remarks of Emlyn. "Here we may observe, that the tenth verse, *And thou Lord, &c.* (though it is a new citation) is not prefaced with, *And, to the Son he saith*, as ver. 8., or with an *again*, as ver. 5, 6. and so chap. ii. 13. but barely, *And thou Lord*. Now the God last mentioned was Christ's God, who had anointed him; and the author thereupon breaks out into the celebration of this God's power, and especially his unchange-

IV. In the next place, we shall mention one passage, (there is no other of a precisely similar kind,) which, as we believe, has been misunderstood from ignorance or inattention to the opinions and modes of conception, which the writer, St. John, had in mind. This is the commencement of his gospel.

"In the beginning was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God."

There is, we conceive, no word in English answering to the Greek word, *Logos*, as here used. It was employed to denote a mode of conception concerning the Deity, familiar at the time when St. John wrote, but which has long since passed away, and to which, with our common apprehensions, we may not be able readily to accommodate our minds. It denoted *his power considered as in action*, his power as exercised in creation, and in his extraordinary manifestations of himself to his creatures. This power, the *Logos* of God, was personified by some in the use of a rhetorical figure; but by others, it was conceived of as residing in, and exercised by and through another being distinct from God, and intermediate between him and his creatures. We have an example of rhetorical personification, or of the attributing of proper personality to the *Logos*, in the apocryphal book of the Wisdom of Solomon (xviii. 15.) where the writer, speaking of the destruction of the first born of the Egyptians, says :

able duration; which he dwells upon, as what he principally cites the text for; in order, I conceive, to prove the stability of the Son's kingdom, before spoken of: *Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; God, thy God, has anointed thee; and thou, Lord, i. e. thou who hast promised him such a throne, art he who laid the foundation of the earth, and made the heavens, which, though of long and permanent duration, yet will perish; but thou remainest, thou art the same, thy years shall not fail.* So that it seems to be a declaration of God's immutability made here, to ascertain the durability of Christ's kingdom, before mentioned; and the rather so, because this passage had been used originally for the same purpose in the 102d Psalm, viz. to infer thence this conclusion, ver. ult. *The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed be established before thee.* In like manner it here proves the Son's throne should be established for ever and ever, by the same argument, viz. by God's immutability; and so was very pertinently alleged of God, without being applied to the Son; to show how able *his God*, who had anointed him, was to make good and maintain what he had granted him, viz. a durable kingdom for ever."—*Emlyn's Examination of Dr. Bennet's New Theory of the Trinity.* TRACTS, vol. II. pp. 203, 204. London, 1731.

Beside the purpose pointed out by Emlyn, the author of the Epistle may have had another in view, which was to declare, that while the throne of Christ being upheld by God should endure forever; the heavens, the local habitation, as they were considered, of angels, should, on the contrary, perish; be rolled up as a garment and changed.

"Thine almighty Word (Logos) leapt down from his royal throne,* a fierce warrior, into the midst of a land of destruction."

This book was written more than a century before the birth of our Saviour.

There is, we think, satisfactory evidence that this notion of a personal Logos was familiar in the time of St. John; and probably had begun to be regarded with a favourable eye by many Christians. We perceive what a near approach, to say the least, had been made to it even at the time when the Wisdom of Solomon was composed. It was the doctrine of Philo, the celebrated Platonizing Jew, who wrote long before St. John, and whose philosophical opinions were probably the same with those of many of his age and nation. His authority must have given a powerful support and sanction to the doctrine, among the more learned of his own countrymen, as we find that it afterwards did among the Christian fathers; by whom his works were read and admired, and quoted. We may easily suppose St. John to have become acquainted with a popular doctrine, and with a common use of the word Logos, without believing that he derived his knowledge directly from the writings of Philo. Indeed we can hardly suppose him to have been ignorant on these subjects.

This doctrine had really its origin in the Platonic philosophy. But from an *accidental* coincidence of expression, it would appear to a Jew or Christian, who had learnt it from this philosophy, to derive strong support from the Old Testament. One meaning of the term, *Logos*, in Greek, is *word*. Now though it was not in reference to this meaning, that the term was originally used to designate the Divine power by the Platonists, yet it happens that the divine power and agency is continually denoted in the Old Testament by the expression, *Logos, word*. "By the word of the Lord, the heavens were made." "The word of the Lord came unto me," say the prophets; &c. The examples of the use which we have mentioned, must be familiar to every reader.

But the term, *Logos*, was used to denote a supposed being, not merely by the Platonists, those who held the opinions of Philo, but likewise by a very early sect of Christian heretics, the Gnostics, who were probably contemporary with St. John. They gave the name of Logos to one of that class of beings whom they called *Æons*. It does not appear, however, that

* This we conceive to be the proper rendering, not "*thy* royal throne," as in the common version. In the original there is no pronoun.

their notions concerning the Logos corresponded much with those of the school of Philo. But in one point they and the Platonists appear to have agreed:—in not believing the personal existence of the Logos to have been, properly speaking, from eternity. That the Gnostics did not hold this belief, we have the testimony of Irenæus, from whom we derive our principal knowledge of their doctrines; nor do we suppose it to have been the opinion of any, who, at the time when St. John wrote, regarded the Logos as a person.

The doctrine concerning the Logos, as a being distinct from God, and intermediate between Him and his creatures, was the embryo form of the Christian Trinity. The writings of Philo, by whom it was taught, were, as we have said, a favorite study of the Christian fathers. This doctrine, we believe, *it was one purpose of St. John to oppose in the introduction of his Gospel.* Using the word, *Logos*, in what had become a common signification of the term, namely, to denote the power of God as displayed in creation, and in his manifestations of himself to his creatures; he, at the same time, denies that it is resident in, or exercised by or through any inferior and intermediate being. He teaches, that it is to be referred immediately to God himself. "*In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God;*" that is to say, the Logos was always with God;—what is properly expressed by this term is, that divine power, which has been always, and has been always with God. "*And the Logos was God;*" that is, this divine power is to be referred immediately to God; the term is not to be understood as denoting any other being.

With the views which we have given, the explanation of the rest of the passage is easy. It is not improbable, however, that in what follows, St. John may have alluded to other errors beside those which we have mentioned. The Gnostics gave the names of **LIGHT** and **LIFE** as well as that of **Logos**, to distinct beings, *Æons*. St. John, by a different use of these terms, irreconcilable with the use which they made of them, probably intended to refer to and condemn their error.

We shall notice particularly but one other clause: "*And the Logos became flesh.*" This seems to us no very harsh figure to denote what we believe to have been intended,—that the divine power was manifested in a human form through Jesus Christ. But if there should seem to be any difficulty in this expression, it may assist our conceptions to know, that according to a common use of the term *Logos*, it might be applied to any being through whom the divine power was strikingly

manifested. Thus Philo calls Moses *the divine Logos*,* and the high priest, *a Logos*.† He uses the term as synonymous with prophet;‡ and applies it to angels, who, he says, were commonly called by this name.§

If our view of the proem of St. John's Gospel be correct, it is remarkable enough, that it is now brought to support that very doctrine, the introduction of which it was intended to oppose.||

The *early* Christian fathers, when, following Philo, they gave a personal existence to the Logos; applied to him, as Philo had done before, the title of God, though in a very inferior sense. Upon the passage where St. John says, that "the Logos was God," they remarked, that the term God is here used without the article; and though, with it, it could denote only the Supreme Being, yet without it, it might be given to the Logos, as implying only an inferior degree of divinity.¶

V. Another class of texts which has been adduced by Trinitarians, consists of *passages in which the expressions are very bold and figurative, and which have been interpreted without regard to this character.*

* Migrat. Abrah. p. 401.—al. Opp. T. I. p. 449. Edit. Mangey.

† Ib. p. 404.—al. I. 452. ‡ Deus Immut. p. 313.—al. I. 293.

§ Migrat. Abrah. p. 415.—al. I. 463. We are referred to these passages by Stephen Nye, in his *Doctrine of the Holy Trinity*, pp. 74, 75.

|| The explanation, which we have given, is essentially the same with that of Le Clerc. See his *Commentary on the New Testament*, and the 8th and 9th of his *Epistolæ Criticæ*. Respecting the statements which we have made, and the explanation of the passage in general, the following works may likewise be consulted. Bryant's *Sentiments of Philo Judæus concerning the Λόγος, or Word of God*. Bruckeri Hist. Phil. Tom. II pp. 808—811. Stephen Nye's *Doctrine of the Holy Trinity*, pp. 70—81. 12mo. Lond. 1701. Dr. Priestley's notes and paraphrase on the passage in his *Notes on Scripture*; and his account of the opinions of Philo, in his *History of Early Opinions concerning Christ*, vol. II. Michaelis' *Introduction to the New Testament* by Marsh; the part which treats of St. John's Gospel. Souverain, *Le Platonisme Devoilé*. Eichhorn's *Einleitung in das N. T. B. II. s. 158—181*. We have referred to writers whose opinions are in many respects different from each other, and from our own; but we cannot help thinking that a fair comparison of them will result in establishing the essential correctness of the explanation which we have given.

It should be observed, however, that a very different interpretation of the passage has been proposed and ably defended by some Unitarian critics. For this, the reader may consult Cappe's *Critical Remarks on Scripture*, vol. I., and Simpson's *Additional Essays on the Language of Scripture*. Essay VII.

¶ Origen Comment. in Joan. Opp. T. iv. pp. 50. 51. Edit. Delaru.

The most remarkable is Colossians i. 15—17. where, speaking of Christ, the apostle says, that he is

“The image of the Invisible God, the first born of the whole creation; for by him were all things created, those in Heaven, and those upon earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or governments, or powers, all were created through him and for him; and he is over all; and all exist by him; (or, are holden together by him.)”

The moral renovation of men by Christianity is repeatedly spoken of by St. Paul under the figure of a new creation, as in the following passages:

“If any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE; (or, there is a new creation.) *The old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.*” 2 Cor. v. 17.

“For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATURE;” (or, perhaps more properly, “but there is a new creation.”) Gal. vi. 15.

“For we are his (God’s) workmanship, CREATED in Christ Jesus unto good works.” Eph. ii. 10.

“Put on the new man, who is CREATED according to [the likeness of] God, in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephes. iv. 24.

The language in the passage from Colossians, on which we are remarking, is to be explained, we conceive, conformably to that in the passages just quoted, and to other similar expressions in the New Testament. It has been conceived to declare, that the *natural creation* was the work of Christ. But it may be remarked at first sight, that the terms used are not such as properly designate the objects of the *natural world*; and not such, therefore, as we should expect to be employed, if these were intended.* In speaking of the natural creation, the same apostle refers it to God in different terms,—to “the Living God who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them.”†

The words *thrones, dominions, &c.* undoubtedly mean, ‘those who sit on thrones,’ ‘those who exercise dominion,’ &c. whether the latter expressions are to be understood figuratively or literally. By a substitution then of these, and of some other expressions which we regard as perfectly equivalent to those of the original, but more conformable to our com-

* Professor Stuart appears to have had some feeling of this; for he has given in his letters a very free rendering of the passage. See Letters, pp. 71, 72.

† Acts xiv. 15.

mon use of language, we may convey the sense, which we believe the apostle intended, in the following terms :

“For to him all things (in the Christian world) owe their origin, the highest and the lowest,* what is seen, and what is not seen, those who sit on thrones, those who exercise dominion, those who have government, and those who have power. He is the author and master of all ; he is over all, and all exist through him ; (or, have a common relation to him.)”

But what is meant by those who sit on thrones, those who exercise dominion, &c. ? We answer, those who hold the highest offices and sustain the highest character in the new dispensation ; all those most dignified and excellent among the followers of the new religion. The Christian dispensation is continually spoken of under the figure of a kingdom ; and it is in reference to this figure, that these expressions are used. Thus Christians in general are called by St. Peter, “a royal priesthood.”

But further, it may help to reconcile us to this figure, to know that the titles, *thrones*, *dominions*, &c. were the same, or similar to those, which the Jews gave to their Rabbies or teachers. This fact is shown at length by Schoettgen, a critic very eminent for his knowledge of Rabbinical learning, and of unsuspected orthodoxy.† St. Paul, therefore, in using this language, merely adopted and applied to the more eminent among Christians, modes of expression, commonly applied by his countrymen to the more eminent among themselves. He elsewhere uses the terms, *governments* (*αρχαι*) and *powers* (*δυναμεις*) concerning Heathen rulers.‡

But, in any case, this passage cannot be understood of the creation of the natural world. This is the work of God. But the person here spoken of is not God, but “the image of God, and the first born of every creature.” It is not of God that it is said (in the 18th verse) that “he is the first born from the dead ;” or (in the 19th) “that it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.”

VI. But a large proportion of the passages adduced to support the doctrine of the Trinity, are *passages misinterpreted through a disregard of the common style of expression*

* “The things in heaven and the things on earth :” It is a common expression in the scriptures, as elsewhere, to speak of any thing being in heaven, or being exalted to heaven, to denote its being highly exalted.

† See Schoettgen's Notes on Matth. vii. 29. Ephes. i. 21. and Coloss. ii. 10. in his *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ*.

‡ Tit. III. 1. Rom. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

in the scriptures. They are not of a character to present any difficulty to an intelligent and unprejudiced reader, who has made himself familiar with this style; who has attended to its peculiarities; who is in the habit of comparing expressions used in one place with the same or similar expressions when they recur in another; and who, availing himself of the best means in his power of interpreting the Sacred Books, reads them in the same exercise of his judgment with which he reads all other writings.

VII. But in the last place, many of the arguments of Trinitarians are founded upon *passages understood without any regard to the most obvious characteristics of language, or the most common rules respecting its interpretation.* Thus, for instance, we find in such books as Jones' Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, arguments which really go upon the assumption that the same word is always used in the same sense; and which, if this assumption be not granted, fall at once to the ground.

We have thus explained our opinions on the subject in controversy. If these opinions be true, we have no doubt that they will finally prevail. In our country especially, where truth has nothing but error to contend with, and is not borne down, as it has been almost every where else, by civil and ecclesiastical power, they must prevail. The great point is to impress those who hold correct opinions with a sense of their importance;—of the importance of presenting Christianity to men such as it really is. *He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.** We regard with the highest satisfaction the exertions, which have been made, and are making in our more southern cities; and consider the disinterested and generous sacrifices of some individuals, with which we have become acquainted, as worthy of all praise. It is not an object of light value which they have in view, and they have given proof, that they *feel* it is not.

Before concluding, we wish to say a word or two respecting our general views of religion; those views, the great characteristics of which Mr. Channing has so ably and eloquently explained and defended in the Sermon, which has given occasion to Professor Stuart's Letters. We are charged with depriving Christianity of all its value; of rejecting every thing but its name. Christianity, WE BELIEVE, has taught the Unity

* Jeremiah xxiii. 28. These words were prefixed by the *Confessor* Emlyn to one of his publications.

of God, and revealed him as the Father of his creatures. It has made known his infinite perfections, his providence, and his moral government. It has directed us to look up to Him as the Being, on whom we and all things are entirely dependent, and to look up to Him with perfect confidence and love. It has made known to us that we are to live forever; it has brought life and immortality to light. Man was a creature of this earth, and it has raised him to a far nobler rank, and taught him to regard himself as an immortal being, and the child of God. It has opened to the sinner the path of penitence and hope. It has afforded to virtue the highest possible sanctions. It gives to sorrow its best and often its only consolation. It has presented us in the life of our great Master with an example of that moral perfection, which is to be the constant object of our exertions. It has established the truths, which it teaches, upon evidence the most satisfactory. It is a most glorious display of the benevolence of God, and of his care for his creatures of this earth. But all this, it seems, is NOTHING;—unless it have also taught, that there are three persons who constitute the one God; or at least that there is some threefold distinction, we know not what, in the Divinity; and further, unless it also teach that one of these persons or distinctions was united in a most incomprehensible manner to the human nature of Christ, so that the sufferings of the latter were the sufferings of the former; it being well understood, at the same time, that the former could not suffer. The religion of joy and consolation, THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD, will, it is thought, lose more than half its value, unless it have announced to us, that we are created under the wrath and curse of God;* that it is impossible for us to perform his will unless our moral natures be created anew; and that this is a favour denied to far the greater part of men, who are required to perform, what he has made it morally impossible they should perform, with the most unrelenting rigour, and under penalty of the most terrible and everlasting torments. Such intelligible and comfortable doctrines as these are represented as the *peculiar* doctrines of Christianity; those from which it derives its value; and our opponents seem to think, that if nothing better was to be effected than to make God known to men, to reveal to them his paternal character, to bring life and immortality to light, and to furnish the highest motives to virtue, it was hardly worth while for the

* See the passages quoted from the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism in the present number of our work, p. 353.

Deity to interpose in a special manner to effect purposes so unimportant.

The doctrines which we believe to be doctrines of Christianity, are doctrines of inestimable value. The question of their truth is one in which we are interested most deeply. Our happiness and our virtue are at stake on the decision. If they are not true, we are miserable indeed. The brute, satisfied with the enjoyments of the present day, has a preferable tenure of existence to man, if they are both to perish together. But if they are true, there is a prospect displayed before us inconceivably glorious and delightful. They are truths which it was worthy of God to teach. Look now at the doctrines which we are opposing. Are these doctrines considered in themselves of so very much importance or value? It may, for aught we know, be important to believe them, if they are true. That is a different question. What we ask is, whether it is very important or desirable that they should be true. Is it very important to our virtue and happiness, that there should be a threefold distinction in the divine nature; or that the mercy of God which is extended towards us, should have been **PURCHASED** with the blood of his Son? Is it desirable for us to be satisfied that our natures are so depraved, that, till they are changed by the act of God, we can do nothing to please him? Examine the creeds of what is called Orthodoxy; and read the summary of obligations which these creeds teach us, that we lie under to God as our **MAKER**. What obligations would be due from his creatures to a being who had formed them under his "displeasure and curse," made them "bond slaves to Satan," and "**JUSTLY LIABLE** (the absurdity is as gross as the impiety) to all punishments in this world, and in that which is to come." With what feelings might such creatures justly regard their Maker? What is the character which they would have a right to ascribe to him? It would be mockery to ask, if it were desirable that this doctrine should be true; or if Christianity would lose much of its value, if it should appear that it taught no such doctrine.

Oh no! these are not doctrines of the gospel; and it is because we have some feeling of the inestimable value of our religion, and some desire to promote its influence, that we wish men to believe that these are not doctrines of the gospel. It is because we feel that God ought to be the object of our most perfect veneration and love, that we revolt at doctrines which confound and darken our ideas of his nature, which represent one person in the Divinity as exacting, and another as submitting to the punishment of our offences; and at other

doctrines far worse than these, which, if it were possible for them to have their full influence upon the mind, would make God an object of utter horror and detestation. We believe that the great truths of religion, which are taught by Christianity, are the foundation of public and private happiness, of the good order of well regulated society, of purity of morals, of domestic comfort, of all that is most generous and most disinterested in the human character, of all those qualities which endear man to man; that they make life tolerable and reconcile us to death; and that it is on these, that the character must be formed, which will fit us for heaven;—and it is, THEREFORE, that we wish them to be presented to men such as they really are, free from all the gross errors which human folly and perversity have connected with them,—errors, which have prevented their reception, and essentially counteracted their influence.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED, at Groton, Massachusetts, September 10, on returning from a journey for his health, the Rev. JOSHUA HUNTINGTON, Pastor of the Old South Church in Boston; in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the twelfth of his ministry

Notwithstanding the interval, which has elapsed, we are unwilling to omit the first opportunity the publication of our work has offered, to notice an event so interesting and instructive as the early death of an useful minister, and to pay some tribute to one, who held strong claims on our affection and regard. Mr. Huntington was the son of an highly respected citizen of New London, Connecticut; and having graduated at Yale College in 1804, and completed his preparatory studies for the ministry, was ordained in 1808 as colleague Pastor with the Rev. Dr. J. Eckley. Upon the death of that excellent man, on the memory of whose mild and candid spirit we repose with pleasing recollections, he succeeded to the sole charge, and continued in the fulfilment of its duties not however without repeated interruptions from feeble health, till within a few weeks of his decease.

Mr. Huntington was, we believe, a faithful and devoted minister of Jesus Christ. His piety seemed to be a strong pervading principle; and his naturally affectionate temper, under the influence of religion, was expressed in a lively regard for the good of souls. His zeal was chastened by prudence, that essential ministerial grace; and those, who knew him intimately, saw that it was free from that alloy of selfishness, and especially the passion for pre-eminence, with which it is too often mingled. Those of his brethren, who found themselves compelled to differ from him in his theological views, can bear their affectionate testimony to his mild candid spirit, to his freedom from asperity in his judgments, to his honourable frankness, and his disposition to friendly intercourse. And we express our sense of this excellence in our departed brother with the more pleasure, because we deem these virtues so essential to the Christian character; and are confident, that now in the light of heaven he perceives to his joy, that they are among the fairest of those fruits of the spirit, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

His people have testified their affectionate regard for his virtues and services, by a most liberal provision for his bereaved family; so early deprived of an husband, father, and friend. With the continuance of the whole salary, and the use of the Parish-house for one year from his decease, they have voted to the widow and children an annual grant of \$1000 for six years; making in the whole a gift of more than 8000 dollars. We are happy in recording this as a laudable expression of Christian sympathy, well worthy, as far as there may be ability, of imitation; and in that richly endowed society, a most judicious as well as liberal appropriation of their funds.

October 21st. Died, at Charlestown, Miss SARAH RUSSELL, aged 68 years. The character of this lady was no ordinary character. The soundness of her understanding, and the clearness and accuracy of her judgment, were the admiration of all that knew her. Reason she knew to be the only *immediate* guide, which God has given to man, to point out the way of duty and happiness. But she felt the necessity of instructing and informing this guide. She therefore sent it abroad among the works of God, to inquire of them what they could tell of their maker, and she made it sit at the feet of Jesus to learn of him his divine communications. But whatever opinions or principles she might in this way imbibe, she was aware that their importance was to be measured solely by their practical influence on the conduct and life. Her morals were strict, and of the highest order. She thought much more, than some do, of the plain precepts of duty *considered as a part of religion*.

Benevolence formed one of the distinguishing traits of her disposition. Hers was liberal and extensive; but, at the same time, rational and discriminating. It was in Religion, that she found her distinction and glory. To bear the cross of a patient and merciful Saviour she justly deemed the highest exaltation, to which human nature can aspire. And she exhibited in herself a noble illustration of the influence which Christianity, as we understand it, is calculated to exert on the human character. Her religion was grounded on a deep sense of piety to God; and on this foundation she built a faith that was rational, consistent, and sincere,—a religion, deep, and pure, and self-denying.

Oct. 7. In Exeter, (N. H.) Rev. JOHN EMERY ABBOT, Pastor of the North Church in Salem, aged 26. His disorder was lingering, and had been protracted for two years under various alternations of hope and fear. He bore them all, as he had ever borne health and prosperity, with perfect equanimity, and the most cheerful resignation. Those, who saw him then, felt what they had always felt when they saw him in health, that his mind and heart were wholly under the control of his religion, and that nothing could shake the spirit of composure, trust, and piety, of cheerfulness and benevolence, which characterized him in life. He died, as he lived, an eminent Christian—admired and beloved by all who knew him for the great simplicity, purity, and loveliness of his character. He deserves a fuller notice than this, and we hope to have an opportunity of giving it.

Nov. 7. At Northampton, Hon. CALEB STRONG, late Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, aged 75. A man highly honoured and trusted by his fellow citizens; greatly respected and beloved by those who knew him; a decided and sincere friend of religion, whose institutions he revered and whose spirit he uniformly exemplified in his life. He was one of the *righteous, who shall be had in everlasting remembrance*. His death was sudden, in a good old age and a ripe hope of glory.

THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 74.

NEW SERIES—No. 6.

For November and December, 1819.

ON THE SAFETY OF BELIEVING TOO MUCH.

THERE is a silly argument in much favour with some persons, that it is the part of discretion to profess the doctrines of orthodoxy, because, say they, it is safer to believe too much than too little. If these doctrines are true, they who reject them are in a dangerous error. If false, the orthodox are to be sure in an error, but not in a dangerous one.

We do not enter into the views of those who think something else as good as the truth. We do not conceive of a safe belief, as a thing capable of being subjected to the measures of quantity. We do not see that the terms, *too much* or *too little*, are in any way applicable to it. Whatever is more or less than truth, is falsehood. Is it safe to believe what is false in a case where belief has a practical influence? Is it prudent to set our minds at rest, because we believe either the truth or something more, when *something more* necessarily means, *something different*?

We think Balaam spoke wisely when he said, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more;" and we think it becomes christians to take equal heed how they add any thing to, or take from, "the things which are written in this book." We are not at all persuaded of the safety of entertaining erroneous views of a subject which has to do with the conduct of life, e. g. the nature of God or of

duty, even if you can dignify your mistake by calling it something more than truth. If your friend promises to render you a service which will save you from bankruptcy, on your conforming to certain conditions, and you, in your affected admiration of his goodness, and real love of your own ease, neglect to perform these conditions, it will fare with you no better, if *he* keeps his word, than if you had had too little confidence in his friendship, and never had applied to him.

When one man is said to believe more than another, by what rule is his amount of faith measured? One standard is the number and comprehensiveness of the propositions he believes. Now to believe many or unqualified propositions, is clearly no way to be safe, if some of the many are false, and some of the unqualified need to have qualifications made. It is no credit to the understanding to receive what is not true, and if it does this where *conduct* depends on its decisions, that conduct will be wrong. To say in this sense, that to believe much, is safe, would be of course to make all error, even religious unbelief, or assent to the most demoralizing doctrines, a harmless thing.

We do not mean to say, that any would justify the remark in this sense. We wish only to go over all the ground, by noticing each of the senses in which the phrase can be used. When one class of christians claims to believe more than another, they appear to mean one of two things. First, they seem to have an indefinite idea that they believe *more* of what is really found in scripture. But can it escape them that this is the very point at issue? We profess to believe *all* that scripture teaches. They, on their part, assert we do not. We, on ours, contend, that what they call scriptural truth, is human error. While this argument is pending, they stand on the ground, that their belief is the truth. They cannot, to shew their safety in believing *more* (as they think) than we, say that they believe *more* of *scripture truth*, for this is the very question in debate; and if they could prove it, their plea of safety then would be, not that what they believed was either the truth or something beyond it, but that what they believed was the truth itself.

But by this *believing much* is commonly meant, we suppose, believing what tasks the faith. He is held to have most faith who has made the greatest sacrifice of the common powers of belief; who has assented, in short, at the greatest cost of common sense. There is an idea swimming in mens' minds,—like the floating island of antiquity, now beneath, now above the surface,—that God is pleased with the surrender of the intellectual nature; and that in assenting to a proposition, which

we secretly believe would prove false if we had the temerity to examine it, a principle of religious obedience is shewn, and an acceptable service rendered. We have no such views of God, nor of truth. On the contrary, it seems to us, that the christian system and doctrines rest on a broad basis of evidence;—ample evidence to determine a reasonable man on any other part of the conduct of life, as well as the religious. We think we see in this, that God approves the exercise of the understanding in the discovery of truth, and we say that those, with whom we argue, are reduced to this dilemma; either they think it a merit to believe that, which is at the same time repugnant to the reason and revealed in scripture, or else, they think it a merit of itself to believe what is repugnant to the reason, without reference to its being revealed or not. If they choose to stand by the first part of the alternative, we say, nothing repugnant to the reason is revealed in scripture, but on the contrary, the truths of revelation are such as an uncorrupted reason most warmly greets. Much that it could never have reached is revealed, but not the shadow of a sentiment which it rejects. Here then we are at issue; does revelation bring truths to light which reason is reluctant to receive? If not, of course there is no ground for the supposition of merit in receiving such. If so, those with whom we argue are right and safe indeed; but it is on the sure ground of believing what is true on the highest evidence, that of the divine declarations; not on the doubtful ground of believing that which taxes the credulity, and may be true or not.

But the other horn of the dilemma is sharper yet. If it is a merit to believe what the understanding relucts from, where will you set the limit of an innocent credulity? If you can believe this, you are ready for the atrocities of a bloody or sensual worship, for the impurity of Mahometanism, or the idolatry of the worshippers of the Lama.

We said, in the beginning of these remarks, that we acknowledge no applicability of the terms *more* or *less* to a saving faith. It seems scarcely necessary to say, that we did not mean that one man may not have a stronger, more efficacious, faith than another, because this has no connexion with the subject; it is not alluded to in the plea for indolence which we are examining. We mean, that doctrines are not valuable or safe because they are *many* or *mysterious*, but because they are *true*. Believing more or less is a thing of no moment. It is believing right or wrong. In many cases, it would be hard to affix a sense to the words, which would not violate the uses of language. One

man believes that God is one person, another that he is three. One believes that he is just and merciful ; another holds the doctrine of reprobation. In what sense does one believe more than another, except, by *more*, be meant *more incredible* ?

One further remark. To feel one's self safe, because one is satisfied that he either believes what God has revealed, or more, what is it but to say that if he is not acquainted with God's truth, he is acquainted with some equally good method of salvation ? It would be difficult to throw more contempt on the gospel revelation, than is done by this ; by saying that we feel secure, because if we are not acquainted with the method of salvation which divine wisdom has adopted, we are acquainted with one as good. Let a man, who quiets his conscience by the argument we have been combating, consider this.—Whatever system of doctrine it be which is revealed in the gospel, we have the warrant of divine wisdom for believing, that that and no other, is the best means of bringing men to holiness and Heaven. That and no other, it is the bounden duty of every christian to search after, and his unspeakable interest to learn. Let men once suppose that they are released from the duty of inquiring for it, because they think they are already possessed of it, or of something equivalent, and there is no end to the delusions which may follow. The truth itself is the thing to be known. It will be an idle excuse, that we thought any form of error would fill its place, whether the error of unbelief or credulity.

OBJECTIONS TO UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY CONSIDERED.

It is due to truth, and a just deference to our fellow christians, to take notice of objections which are currently made to our particular views of religion ; nor ought we to dismiss such objections, as unworthy of attention, on account of their supposed lightness ; because what is light to us, may weigh much with our neighbour, and truth may suffer from obstructions which a few explanations might remove. It is to be feared that those christians, who are called Unitarian, have been wanting in this duty. Whilst they have met the laboured arguments of their opponents fully and fairly, they have overlooked the loose, vague, indefinite objections, which float through the community, and operate more on common minds than formal reasoning. On some of these objections, remarks will now be offered ; and it is hoped that our plainness of speech will not be construed

into severity, or our strictures on different systems be ascribed to a desire of retaliation. It cannot be expected, that we shall repel with indifference, what seem to us reproaches on some of the most important and consoling views of christianity. Believing that the truths, which through God's good providence we are called to maintain, are necessary to the vindication of the divine character, and to the prevalence of a more enlightened and exalted piety, we are bound to assert them earnestly, and to speak freely of the opposite errors which now disfigure christianity. We trust, however, that when it is remembered, with what language and feelings our views are assailed, we shall not be thought unwarrantably warm in their defence.—What then are the principal objections to Unitarian Christianity?

1. It is objected to us, that we deny *the divinity of Jesus Christ*. Now what does this objection mean? What are we to understand by *the divinity of Christ*? In the sense in which many christians, and perhaps a majority, interpret it, we do not deny it, but believe it as firmly as themselves. We believe firmly in the *divinity* of Christ's mission and office, that he spoke with *divine* authority, and was a bright image of the *divine* perfections. We believe that God dwelt in him, manifested himself through him, taught men by him, and communicated to him his spirit without measure. We believe that Jesus Christ was the most glorious display, expression, and representative of God to mankind, so that in seeing and knowing him, we see and know the invisible Father; so that when Christ came, God visited the world and dwelt with men more conspicuously than at any former period. In Christ's words we hear God speaking; in his miracles we behold God acting; in his character and life we see an unsullied image of God's purity and love. We believe, then, in the *divinity of Christ*, as this term is often and properly used. How then, it may be asked, do we differ from other christians? We differ in this important respect. Whilst we honour Christ as the Son, representative, and image of the supreme God, *we do not believe him to be the supreme God himself*. We maintain, that Christ and God are *distinct beings, two beings*, not one and the same being. On this point a little repetition may be pardoned, for many good christians, after the controversies of ages, misunderstand the precise difference between us and themselves. Trinitarianism teaches, that Jesus Christ is the supreme and infinite God, and that he and his Father are not only one in affection, counsel and will, but are strictly and literally *one and the same being*. Now to us this doctrine is most

unscriptural and irrational. We say that the Son cannot be the same being with his own Father, that he, who was sent into the world to save it, cannot be the living God who sent him. The language of Jesus is explicit and unqualified. "I came not to do mine own will." "I came not from myself." "I came from God." Now we affirm, and this is our chief heresy, that Jesus was not and could not be *the God from whom he came*, but was another being; and it amazes us, that any can resist this simple truth. The doctrine, that Jesus, who was born at Bethlehem; who ate and drank and slept; who suffered and was crucified; who came from God; who prayed to God; who did God's will; and who said, on leaving the world, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God;" the doctrine, that this Jesus was the supreme God himself, and the same being with his Father, this seems to us a contradiction to reason and scripture so flagrant, that the simple statement of it is a sufficient refutation. We are often charged with degrading Christ; but if this reproach belong to any christians, it falls, we fear, on those who accuse him of teaching a doctrine so contradictory, and so subversive of the supremacy of our Heavenly Father. Certainly our humble and devout Master has given no ground for this accusation. He always expressed towards God the reverence of a son. He habitually distinguished himself from God. He referred to God all his powers. He said, without limitation or reserve, "The Father is greater than I." "Of myself I can do nothing." If to represent Christ as a being distinct from God, and as inferior to him, be to *degrade* him, then let our opponents lay the guilt, where it belongs, not on us, but on our master, whose language we borrow, in whose very words we express our sentiments, whose words we dare not trifle with and force from their plain sense. Our limits will not allow us to say more; but we ask common christians, who have taken their opinions from the Bible rather than from human systems, to look honestly into their own minds, and to answer frankly, whether they have not understood and believed Christ's divinity, in the sense maintained by us, rather than in that for which Trinitarians contend.

2. I proceed to another objection, and one which probably weighs more with multitudes than any other. It is this, that our doctrine respecting Christ *takes from the sinner the only ground of hope*. It is said continually by our opponents, "We and all men are sinners by our very nature, and infinitely guilty before God. The sword of divine justice hangs over us, and hell opens beneath us; and where shall we

find a refuge, but in an infinite Saviour? We want an *infinite atonement*; and in depriving us of this, you rob us of our hope, you tear from the scriptures the only doctrine which meets our wants. We may burn our bibles, if your interpretation be true, for our case is desperate; we are lost forever." In such warm and wild language, altogether unwarranted by scripture, yet exceedingly fitted to work on common and terror-stricken minds, our doctrine is constantly assailed.

Now to this declamation, for such we esteem it, we oppose one plain request. Show us, we say, a *single* passage in the Bible in which we are told, that the sin of man is infinite, and needs an infinite atonement. We find *not one*. Not even a whisper of this doctrine comes to us from the sacred writers. Let us stop a moment and weigh this doctrine. It teaches us, that man, although created by God a frail, erring, and imperfect being, and even created with an irresistible propensity to sin, is yet regarded by his Creator as an *infinite offender*, meriting *infinite punishment* for his earliest transgressions; and that he is doomed to *endless torment*, unless an infinite Saviour appear for his rescue. And what man, we ask, has the courage to charge on our benevolent and righteous Parent, this merciless and iniquitous government of his creatures. Tell us not that Unitarianism cuts off the sinner's hope; for if God be what this system teaches, we see no hope for saint or sinner, for men or angels. Under such a sovereign every one's prospects grow black; every heart may well shudder.—We maintain, that man is not created in a condition which makes an infinite atonement necessary; nor do we believe that any creature can fall into a condition, from which God may not deliver him without this rigid expedient. Surely, if an infinite satisfaction to justice were indispensable to our salvation, if God took on him human nature for the very purpose of offering it, and if this fact constitute the peculiar glory, the life and essence, and the saving efficacy of the gospel, we must find it expressed clearly, definitely, in at least one passage in the Bible. But not one, we repeat it, can be found there.—We maintain farther, that this doctrine of God becoming a victim and sacrifice for his own rebellious subjects, is as irrational as it is unscriptural. We have always supposed that atonement, if necessary, was to be made *to*, not *by*, the sovereign, who has been offended; and we cannot conceive a more unlikely method of vindicating his authority, than that he himself should bear the punishment which is due to transgressors of his laws. We have another objection. If an infinite atonement be necessary, and if, consequently, none but God can make it, we see not but that God

must become a sufferer, must take upon himself our pain and wo; a thought from which a pious mind shrinks with horror. To escape this difficulty, we are told, that Christ suffered *as man, not as God*; but if man only suffered, if only a human and finite mind suffered, if Christ, as God, was perfectly happy on the cross, and bore only a short and limited pain in his human nature, where, we ask, was the infinite atonement? Where is the boasted hope, which this doctrine is said to give to the sinner?

The objection, that there is no hope for the sinner, unless Christ be the infinite God, amazes us. Surely if we have a *Father in heaven, of infinite goodness and power*, we need *no other infinite person*, to save us. The common doctrine disparages and dishonours the only true God, our Father, as if, without the help of a second and a third divinity, equal to himself, he could not restore his frail creature, man. *We* have not the courage of our brethren. With the scriptures in our hands, with the solemn attestations which they contain to the divine Unity, and to Christ's dependence, we dare not give to the God and Father of Jesus, any equal or rival in the glory of originating our redemption, or of accomplishing it by underived and infinite power.—Are we asked, as we sometimes are, what is our hope, if Christ be not the supreme God? We answer, it is the boundless and almighty goodness of *his* Father and *our* Father; a goodness, which cannot require an infinite atonement for the sins of a frail and limited creature. God's essential and unchangeable mercy, not Christ's infinity, is the scriptural foundation of a sinner's hope. In the scriptures, our Heavenly Father is always represented as the sole original, spring, and first cause of our salvation; and let no one presume to divide his glory with another. That Jesus came to save us, we owe entirely to the Father's benevolent appointment. That Jesus is perfectly adequate to the work of our salvation, is to be believed, not because he is himself the supreme God, but because the supreme and unerring God selected, commissioned, and empowered him for this office. That his death is an important means of our salvation, we gratefully acknowledge; but ascribe its efficacy to the merciful disposition of God towards the human race. To build the hope of pardon on the independent and infinite sufficiency of Jesus Christ, is to build on an unscriptural and false foundation; for Jesus teaches us, that of himself he can do nothing; that all power is *given* to him by his Father; and that he is a proper object of trust, because he came not of himself, or to do his own will, but because the Father sent him. We indeed lean on Christ, but it is because

he is "a corner-stone, *chosen by God, and laid by God in Zion.*" God's forgiving love, declared to mankind by Jesus Christ, and exercised through him, is the foundation of hope to the penitent, on which we primarily rest, and a firmer the universe cannot furnish us.

3. We now proceed to another objection. We are charged with expecting *to be saved by works and not by grace.* This charge may easily be despatched, and a more groundless one cannot easily be imagined. We indeed attach great importance to *Christian works, or Christian obedience,* believing that a practice or life, conformed to the precepts and example of Jesus, is the great end for which faith in him is required, and is the great condition on which everlasting life is bestowed. We are accustomed to speak highly of the virtues and improvements of a true Christian, rejecting with abhorrence the idea, that they are no better than the outward Jewish righteousness, which the prophet called "filthy rags;" and maintaining with the apostle, that they are "in the sight of God, of great price." We believe that holiness or virtue is the very image of God in the human soul, a ray of his brightness, the best gift which he communicates to his creatures, the highest benefit which Christ came to confer, the only important and lasting distinction between man and man. Still we always and earnestly maintain, that no human virtue, no human obedience, can give a legal claim, a right by merit, to the life and immortality brought to light by Christ. We see and mourn over the deficiencies, broken resolutions, and mixed motives of the best men. We always affirm, that God's grace, benignity, free kindness, is needed by the most advanced Christian, and that to this alone we owe the promise in the gospel, of full remission and everlasting happiness to the penitent. None speak of mercy more constantly than we. One of our distinctions is, that we magnify this lovely attribute of the Deity. One of our strong objections to Calvinism is, that it subverts God's grace, annihilates his forgiving goodness, by teaching that an infinite substitute is provided for guilty men, in whom their sins, instead of being pardoned, are fully and infinitely punished. So accustomed are we to insist on the infinity of God's grace and mercy, that our adversaries often charge us with forgetting his justice; and yet it is objected to us, that, renouncing grace, we appeal to justice, and build our hope on the abundance of our merit!

4. We now proceed to another objection often urged against our views, or rather against those who preach them; and it is this, that we *preach Morality.* To meet this objec-

tion, we beg to know what is intended by morality. Are we to understand by it, what it properly signifies, *our whole duty*, however made known to us, whether by nature or revelation? Does it mean the whole extent of those obligations which belong to us as moral beings? Does it mean that "sober, righteous, godly life," which our moral Governour has prescribed to us by his Son, as the great preparation for Heaven? If this be morality, we cheerfully plead guilty to the charge of preaching it, and of labouring chiefly and constantly to enforce it; and believing, as we do, that all the doctrines, precepts, threatenings, and promises, of the gospel, are revealed for no other end than to make men *moral*, in this true and generous sense, we hope to continue to merit this reproach.

We fear, however, that this is not the meaning of the morality, which is said to be the burden of our preaching. Some, at least, who thus reproach us, mean, that we are accustomed to enjoin only a *worldly* and *social morality*, consisting in common honesty, common kindness, and freedom from gross vices; neglecting to inculcate inward purity, devotion, heavenly mindedness, and love to Jesus Christ. We hope that the persons, who thus accuse us, speak from rumour, and have never heard our instructions for themselves; for the charge is false: and no one, who ever sat under our ministry, can urge it, without branding himself a slanderer. The first and great commandment, which is to love God supremely, is recognized and enforced habitually in our preaching; and our obligations to Jesus Christ, the friend who died for us, are urged, we hope, not wholly without tenderness and effect.

It is but justice, however, to observe of many, that when they reproach us with *moral preaching*, they do not mean that we teach only outward decencies, but that we do not inculcate certain favourite doctrines, which are to them the very marrow and richness of the gospel. When such persons hear a sermon, be the subject what it may, which is not seasoned with recognitions of the trinity, total depravity, and similar articles of faith, they call it *moral*. According to this strange and unwarrantable use of the term, we rejoice to say that we are "moral preachers;" and it comforts us that we have for our pattern, "Him, who spake as never man spake," and who, in his longest discourse, has dropt not a word about a Trinity or inborn corruption, and special and electing grace; and still more, we seriously doubt, whether our preaching could with propriety be called *moral*, did we urge these doctrines, especially the two last; for, however hotly they may be defended by honest men, they seem to us to border on *immorality*; that is, to dishonour

God, to weaken the sense of responsibility, to break the spirit, and to loosen the restraints on guilty passion.

5. Another objection urged against us, is, that our system does not produce as much *zeal, seriousness, and piety* as other views of religion. This objection it is difficult to repel, except by language which will seem to be a boasting of ourselves. When expressed in plain language, it amounts to this—"We Trinitarians and Calvinists are better and more pious than you Unitarians, and consequently our system is more scriptural than yours." Now assertions of this kind do not strike us as very modest and humble, and we believe, that truth does not require us to defend it by setting up our piety above that of our neighbours.—This, however, we would say, that if our zeal and devotion are faint, the fault is our own, not that of our doctrine. We are sure that our views of the Supreme Being are incomparably more affecting and attractive, than those which we oppose. It is the great excellence of our system, that it exalts God, vindicates his paternal attributes, and appeals powerfully to the ingenuous principles of love, gratitude and veneration; and when we compare it with the doctrines which are spread around us, which make God a despot, and religion an offering of abject fear, we feel that of all men we are most inexcusable, if a filial piety do not spring up and grow strong in our hearts.

Perhaps it may not be difficult to suggest some causes for the charge, that our views do not favour seriousness and zeal. One reason probably is, that we interpret with much rigour those precepts of Christ, which forbid ostentation, and enjoin modesty and retirement in devotion. We dread a showy religion. We are disgusted with pretensions to superior sanctity, that stale and vulgar way of building up a sect. We believe that true religion speaks in actions more than in words, and manifests itself chiefly in the common temper and life; in giving up the passions to God's authority, in inflexible uprightness and truth, in active and modest charity, in candid judgment, and in patience under trials and injuries. We think it no part of piety to publish its fervours, but prefer a delicacy in regard to these secrets of the soul; and hence, to those persons, who think that religion is to be worn conspicuously and spoken of passionately, we may seem cold and dead, when, perhaps, were the heart uncovered, it might be seen to be "alive to God," as truly as their own.

Again, it is one of our principles, flowing necessarily from our views of God, that religion is *cheerful*; that where its natural tendency is not obstructed by false theology, or a gloomy temperament, it opens the heart to every pure and innocent

pleasure. We do not think, that piety disfigures its face, or wraps itself in a funeral pall as its appropriate garb. Now too many conceive of religion as something solemn, sad, and never to be named but with an altered tone and countenance; and where they miss these imagined signs of piety, they can hardly believe that a sense of God dwells in the heart.

Another cause of the error in question, we believe to be this. Our religious system absolutely excludes those overwhelming terrors and transports, and those sudden changes of the character, which many think essential to piety. We do not believe in shaking and disordering men's understandings by excessive fear, as a preparation for supernatural grace and immediate conversion. This we regard as a dreadful corruption and degradation of religion. Religion, we believe, is a gradual and rational work, beginning ordinarily in education, confirmed by reflexion, growing by the regular use of Christian means, and advancing silently to perfection. Now, because we specify no time when we were overpowered and created anew by irresistible impulse; because we relate no agonies of despair succeeded by miraculous light and joy, we are thought by some to be strangers to piety—how reasonably let the judicious determine.

Once more; we are thought to want zeal, because our principles forbid us to use many methods for spreading them, which are common with other Christians. Whilst we value highly our peculiar views, and look to them for the best fruits of piety, we still consider ourselves as bound to think charitably of those who doubt or deny them; and with this conviction, we cannot enforce them with that vehemence, positiveness, and style of menace, which constitute much of the zeal of certain denominations,—and we freely confess, that we would on no account exchange *our* charity for their *zeal*; and we trust that the time is near, when he, who holds what he deems truth with lenity and forbearance, will be accounted *more pious* than he who compasses sea and land to make proselytes to his sect, and “shuts the gates of mercy” on all who will not bow their understandings to his creed.—We fear, that in these remarks we may have been unconsciously betrayed into a self-exalting spirit. Nothing could have drawn them from us, but the fact, that a very common method of opposing our sentiments is to decry the piety of those who adopt them. After all, we mean not to deny our great deficiencies. We have nothing to boast before God, although the cause of truth forbids us to submit to the censoriousness of our brethren.

6. Another objection to our views, is, that they *lead to a rejection of revelation*. Unitarianism has been pleasantly called "a half-way house to infidelity." Now to this objection we need not oppose general reasonings. We will state a plain fact. It is this. A large proportion of the most able and illustrious defenders of the truth of Christianity have been Unitarians; and our religion has received from them, to say the least, as important service in its conflicts with infidelity, as from any class of Christians whatever. From the long catalogue of advocates of Christianity among Unitarians, we can select now but a few; but these few are a host.—The name of John Locke is familiar to every scholar. He is revered as the father of the true philosophy of the human mind; nor is this his highest praise. His writings on government and toleration contributed, more than those of any other individual, to the diffusion of free and generous sentiments through Europe and America; and perhaps Bishop Watson has not greatly exaggerated, when he says, "This great man has done more for the establishment of pure Christianity than any author I am acquainted with." He was a laborious and successful student of the scriptures. His works on the "Epistles of Paul," and on the "Reasonableness of Christianity," formed an era in sacred literature; and he has the honour of having shed a new and bright light on the darkest parts of the New Testament, and in general on the Christian system. Now Locke, be it remembered, was a Unitarian.—We pass to another intellectual prodigy, to Newton, a name which every man of learning pronounces with reverence; for it reminds him of faculties so exalted above those of ordinary men, that they seem designed to help our conceptions of superior orders of being. This great man, who gained by intuition what others reap from laborious research, after exploring the laws of the universe, turned for light and hope to the Bible; and although his theological works cannot be compared with Locke's, yet in his illustrations of the prophecies and of scripture chronology, and in his criticisms on two doubtful passages,* which are among the chief supports of the doctrine of the Trinity, he is considered as having rendered valuable service to the Christian cause. Newton too was a Unitarian. We are not accustomed to boast of men, or to prop our faith by great names; for Christ and *He only* is our master; but it is with pleasure, that we find in our ranks the most gifted, sagacious, and exalted minds; and we cannot but smile, when we sometimes hear from men and

* 1 John v. 7.—1 Tim. iii. 16.

women of very limited culture, and with no advantages for enlarged inquiry, reproachful and contemptuous remarks on a doctrine, which the vast intelligence of Locke and Newton, after much study of the scriptures, and in opposition to a prejudiced and intolerant age, received as the truth of God. It is proper to state, that doubts have *lately* been raised as to the religious opinions of Locke and Newton, and for a very obvious reason. In these times of growing light, their names have been found too useful to the Unitarian cause. But the long and general belief of the Unitarianism of these illustrious men, can hardly be accounted for, but by admitting the fact; and we know of no serious attempts to set aside the proofs on which this belief is founded.

We pass to another writer, who was one of the brightest ornaments of the church of England and of the age in which he lived, Dr. Samuel Clarke. In classical literature and in metaphysical speculation, Dr. Clarke has a reputation which needs no tribute at our hands. His sermons are an invaluable repository of scriptural criticism; and his work on the evidences of natural and revealed religion, has ever been considered as one of the ablest vindications of our common faith. This great man was a Unitarian. He believed firmly that Jesus was a distinct being from his Father, and a derived and dependent being; and he desired to bring the liturgy of his church into a correspondence with these doctrines.

To those who are acquainted with the memorable infidel controversy in the early part of the last century, excited by the writings of Bolingbroke, Tindal, Morgan, Collins, and Chubb, it will be unnecessary to speak of the zeal and power with which the Christian cause was maintained by learned Unitarians. But we must pass over these to recal a man, whose memory is precious to enlightened believers; we mean Lardner, that most patient and successful advocate of Christianity; who has written, we believe, more largely than any other author, on the evidences of the gospel; from whose works later authors have drawn as from a treasure house; and whose purity and mildness have disarmed the severity and conciliated the respect of men, of very different views from his own. Lardner was a Unitarian.—Next to Lardner, the most laborious advocate of Christianity against the attacks of infidels, in our own day, was Priestley; and whatever we may think of some of his opinions, we believe that none of his opposers ever questioned the importance of his vindications of our common faith. To these we might, perhaps, add another distinguished

name. Paley has nowhere declared himself a Unitarian. But in his writings we find no traces of Trinitarianism; and the uniform impression which his works have left on our minds, is, that he considered Christ as a distinct being from his Father, and a derived and subordinate being.—We certainly do not say too much, when we affirm, that Unitarians have not been surpassed by any denomination in zealous substantial service to the Christian cause. Yet we are told, that Unitarianism leads to infidelity. We are reproached with defection from that religion, round which we have gathered in the day of its danger, and from which, we trust, persecution and death cannot divorce us.

It is indeed said, that instances have occurred of persons, who, having given up the Trinitarian doctrine, have not stopt there, but have resigned one part of Christianity after another, until they have become thorough infidels. To this we answer, that such instances we have never known; but that such should occur is not improbable, and is what we even should expect; for it is natural, that when the mind has detected one error in its creed, it should distrust every other article, and should exchange its blind and hereditary assent for a sweeping scepticism. We have examples of this truth at the present moment, both in France and Spain, where multitudes have proceeded from rejecting Popery to absolute Atheism. Now who of us will argue, that the Catholick faith is true, because multitudes who relinquished it, have also cast away every religious principle and restraint; and if the argument be not sound on the side of Popery, how can it be pressed into the service of Trinitarianism? The fact is, that false and absurd doctrines, when exposed, have a natural tendency to beget scepticism in those who received them without reflection. None are so likely to believe *too little* as those who have begun with believing *too much*; and hence we charge upon Trinitarianism whatever tendency may exist in those who forsake it, to sink gradually into infidelity.

Unitarianism does not lead to infidelity. On the contrary, its excellence is, that it fortifies faith. Unitarianism is Christianity stripped of those corrupt additions, which shock reason and our moral feelings. It is a rational and amiable system, against which no man's understanding or conscience or charity or piety revolts. Can the same be said of that system, which teaches the doctrines of three equal persons in one God, of natural and total depravity, of infinite atonement, of special and electing grace, and of the everlasting misery of the non-elected part of mankind. We believe that unless Christianity be purified from these corruptions, it will not be able to bear the unsparing

scrutiny to which the progress of society is exposing it. We believe that it must be reformed, or intelligent men will abandon it. As the friends of Christianity, and the foes of infidelity, we are therefore solicitous to diffuse, what seem to us nobler and juster views of this divine system.

It was our purpose to consider one more objection to our views, viz. that they give no consolation in sickness and death. But we have only time to express amazement at such a charge. What! A system, which insists with a peculiar energy on the pardoning mercy of God, on his universal and parental love, and on the doctrine of a resurrection and immortality, such a system unable to give comfort? It unlocks infinite springs of consolation and joy, and gives to him who practically receives it, a living, overflowing, and unspeakable hope. Its power to sustain the soul in death has been often tried; and did we believe dying men to be inspired, or that peace and hope in the last hours were God's seal to the truth of doctrines, we should be able to settle at once the controversy about Unitarianism. A striking example of the power of this system in disarming death, was lately given by a young minister in a neighbouring town,* known to many of our readers, and singularly endeared to his friends by eminent Christian virtue. He was smitten with sickness in the midst of a useful and happy life, and sunk slowly to the grave. His religion, and it was that which has now been defended, gave habitual peace to his mind, and spread a sweet smile over his pale countenance. He retained his faculties to his last hour; and when death came, having left pious counsel to the younger members of his family, and expressions of gratitude to his parents, he breathed out life, in the language of Jesus, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." Such was the end of one, who held, with an unwavering faith, the great principles which we have here advanced; and yet our doctrine has no consolation, we are told, for sickness and death!

We have thus endeavoured to meet the objections which are commonly urged against our views of religion; and we have done this, not to build up a party, but to promote views of Christianity, which seem to us particularly suited to strengthen men's faith in it, and to make it fruitful of good works and holy lives. Christian virtue, Christian holiness, Love to God and man, these are all which we think worth contending for; and these we believe to be intimately connected with the system now maintained. If in this we err, may God discover our

* Rev. John E. Abbot, of Salem.

error and disappoint our efforts.—We ask no success, but what He may approve—no proselytes, but such as will be improved and rendered happier by the adoption of our views.

ON BOOKS OF DEVOTION.

Books of Devotion exert an influence over the religious world more extensive and more powerful, we believe, than is generally supposed. Other books are read but by few, and have but little influence on the few that read them; and often, indeed, directly the opposite influence from what was intended. But this is not the case with books of devotion. All men read them, and all men *think* they understand them. They constitute the *whole* reading of many, and of course supply them with all their religious sentiments. They are also commonly addressed to the imagination and passions, and must therefore have a much greater effect than books addressed to the understanding. The subject too, on which these books treat, is one above all others interesting and engaging, and every thing which they contain must on this account come to the mind with greater weight. In addition to all this, the views and feelings of the writers of these books, strike us as being in the main highly commendable, and so much are we pleased with the earnestness and power with which they press on mankind the importance and necessity of devotion to God, that we are predisposed to admit whatever they may advance in this connexion; so much do we applaud their general purpose, that we unconsciously come into all their peculiarities, and adopt them as our own, without so much as once questioning their authority. Let the hints, which we have here thrown out, be duly considered, and we think that all must unite with us in believing, that books of devotion have more to do than any other books, in forming the opinions and moulding the character of religious men. Controversial and expository writings have done something, and there are times when they are peculiarly useful. But their influence is as nothing, compared with that of devotional works. Baxter's "*Call to the Unconverted*" has done more to propagate his peculiar sentiments, than all the rest of his five folio volumes; Doddridge's "*Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*" has had more effect on the minds of men, an hundred times over, than his "*Family Expositor*;" and Allein's "*Alarm*" has made a thousand converts, where

Edwards' and Emmons' metaphysical speculations have made, or ever will make, one.

Since then the actual influence of these books is so great, it is of the utmost importance that they should be of such a kind that their influence may also be good, purely good, without any mixture of evil. They may be made the mightiest of all engines to move the feelings and wield the prejudices of the world; and it is therefore so much the more necessary, that they should be employed exclusively on the side of humanity and truth. It is to be deeply regretted that this is not always the case. Numbers of them, we apprehend, are enlisted in the service of error and bad feelings, inculcating sentiments and breathing a spirit no where to be found in the gospel. There is too much reason to fear, that many of those books, purporting to be books of devotion, do little else but propagate wrong opinions and wrong dispositions, acting on the minds of men with a power as mischievous as it is extensive and lasting. Even those books, the leading object and general tenour of which are decidedly good, often have their consistency destroyed, and their good effect in a great measure prevented, by the occasional introduction of sentiments at which every enlightened christian must revolt. In almost every such instance, we have been sorry to see, that what is good does little but recommend what is bad in the publication; we mean, that the earnest spirit and pious design exhibited throughout such publications seem to answer no end, but the evil one of giving to the errors and absurdities they countenance a currency and popularity, which they would not otherwise have obtained. We are fully persuaded, that many of the opinions prevalent at the present day, and which we cannot but think to be both unscriptural and irrational, are indebted almost entirely to a few popular devotional works, for the strong hold they have gained on the affections of the people.

More might well be written on this point, for we do not think it has yet attracted sufficient attention from those, whose office and duty it is to expose and correct the errors and mistakes that may exist on the subject of religion. What has been said, however, we presume is enough to convince any one, that the influence of books of devotion may be as disastrous as it is general. They may be made to do much good, but they may also be made to do much evil. No books, therefore, should be watched with greater jealousy; none should be criticised with greater severity; and none should be selected and recommended with greater care. From the vast mass

of devotional works, of which many deserve no praise, none should be selected and recommended, but such as are pure in sentiment, catholic in spirit, and chaste in style ; for so long as those of a different description are circulated and approved, it is in vain to think of counteracting by any other means, the bad influence they will have on the minds of men.

As therefore it is of the utmost importance that books of devotion should be selected with judgment and care, we shall attempt to suggest a few of those rules by which we should be governed in making this selection. We are aware that by following these rules, many popular works, whose authority has almost superseded that of the Bible, will be rejected. But for the consequences of these rules, it will be recollected, we are not answerable. It is enough for us to show, that the rules themselves are founded in truth, and that they are such as men of sense and discernment must approve.

Our first rule, then, is, that we should discountenance such books of devotion as are calculated to give wrong ideas of the nature of devotion itself. Devotion is nothing else but practical piety. It consists in cherishing diligently and habitually the principles of true piety, and applying them to the regulation of the temper and the government of the life. This is devotion ; and a book, which recommends any thing else under the sanction of this name, ought to be discountenanced. We are aware that the writer of it may be animated by a sincere desire to do good—that he may be actuated by a zeal for what he deems to be religion ; still, however, we maintain that the book itself must have a dangerous tendency. By misleading us as to what constitutes a devout frame of mind, it must also mislead us as to what ought ever to be the subject of our prayers, and the object of our exertions, and give a wrong direction to all our religious principles. It must also dispose us to place an ill-grounded confidence in a spurious kind of devotion, which ought not so much as to be named with that which is genuine—leading us to aim at that alone, to rest contented with it, and to hold it, and build on it as a succedaneum for something better. Such works are liable to all the objections that can be brought against the doctrine of penance among the Catholics, which has substituted in the room of true christian self-denial, a multitude of unmeaning and profitless acts of self-mortification. All books, therefore, which, under the colour of recommending devotion, recommend what is not devotion, but something different and inferior, and often highly injurious—all such books as recommend devotion, making it however to consist, not in a steady frame of the affections, in which the man is led to

live and act under a constant sense of the divine character, presence and government, but in certain fervours of the imagination, certain transports of feeling, or, in short, in any excitement of the mind that is at the same time unnatural, unaccountable, and ungovernable—all such books, we think, should be avoided as dangerous; and we conceive it to be the solemn duty of every serious and enlightened christian, to discourage their circulation.

Another rule of importance to be observed in selecting good devotional works is, to be on our guard against those writers who seize every opportunity to insinuate their own peculiar and erroneous sentiments. Devotion does not depend on the peculiar doctrines of any sect. It does not result from any peculiar views of the christian scheme. But it grows up in the human mind from contemplating aright those great principles of religion, which are held in common by all believers. It springs from seriously considering that relation which we all admit Man bears to God—from considering the Supreme Being as our proprietor, governour, Father and friend.—These are the considerations to which all true devotion must ultimately be referred, and to these alone; and these are considerations, the justness of which no one can doubt, and the force of which no one will question. Yet it is the fault of most men, that they are apt to think more, and lay more stress, on those doctrines by which they are distinguished from others, than upon those in which all are agreed. Devotional writers especially, are ever prone to introduce and insist upon their own peculiar opinions, on every occasion which they can either find or make. Perhaps it is because they value religious truth more dearly; but certain it is, that in works professedly written for the sole purpose of inculcating devotion, many of them omit no opportunity to insinuate their own peculiar views as highly important, if not absolutely essential, to a devout frame of mind. It is true they do not undertake formally to defend the dogmas of their school; but, what is a great deal worse, they take them for granted; they assume them as incontestable truths—as undisputed principles, lying at the root of all religion. And in this light they are too apt to be viewed and admitted by the incautious and unsuspecting reader, without so much as once allowing himself to suppose it possible that they are unfounded. Thus it is that errors are propagated without end, and that, too, the more effectually, because propagated in connexion with some of the most impressive and affecting truths of religion, and united and blended with some of the deepest and holiest feelings of our

nature. Deeply, therefore, do we lament that so many of our most popular devotional works have proceeded from men—whose sincere and unaffected piety we love and venerate—but whose doctrines are so different from what we conceive the scriptures to teach. And of such works we acknowledge our fear is, that the good influence they might otherwise have on mankind, is in a considerable degree counteracted by the errors, which it is their direct and necessary tendency to disseminate.

A third rule to be regarded in selecting such devotional works as ought to be recommended, relates to the manner and spirit with which they are written. It is not difficult to notice a material difference among them when considered in this point of view. Some are written in a style that is chaste and manly, and others in one that is puerile and vulgar: some breathe a spirit that is mild and amiable, and others one that is gloomy and bitter: some are calculated at the same time to enlighten the mind and enlarge the heart, while others can only tend to flatter men's prejudices and inflame their passions. Such, in short, is the temper of some of these productions, that their immediate tendency must be to promote, and such the temper of others, that their immediate tendency must be to destroy, the influence of that heaven-born charity, which is the beginning and end, the alpha and omega, of every thing that is good among the children of one common Father. Here, then, there is vast room for discrimination, and vast need of it. The importance and necessity of this must be particularly felt at the present day, when a multitude of books of a devotional cast have been thrown upon the public, which do not seem to indicate in their authors those qualifications of mind, or in many instances, we are sorry to add, those qualifications of the heart, which are absolutely indispensable in a good devotional writer. We must be allowed to consider them, that is, many of them, as poor, and low, and paltry things, wholly unworthy of favour or respect. We fear they are doing much to take from piety its respectability, and to make devotion itself only a term of derision. As therefore we wish for religion without cant, and for devotion without vulgarity, we conceive it to be incumbent on all, to read and to recommend only such devotional works, as to zeal add knowledge, to knowledge good feeling, and to good feeling a pure and dignified style.

These are the rules, upon this subject, which we think it most important to lay down. By observing them it will at once be perceived, that many books of devotion now in repute, must be exchanged for others of a far less exceptionable cha-

racter. This we conceive is an exchange devoutly to be wished ; for we are deeply impressed with a conviction, that many of the present popular works on devotion, are such as to give us very defective views of the nature of religion, mislead us as to the way in which its graces are to be found, deceive us as to the true grounds of christian hope, and form in us characters, which will possess enough perhaps of seriousness and zeal, but be deficient in those chaste and manly virtues, that high tone of moral feeling, and those generous and exalted motives and aims, which ought preeminently to distinguish the follower of Jesus.

It cannot be supposed from the course of our remarks, that we would discourage the reading of *all* devotional works. On the contrary, we conceive them to be, next to the scriptures, the life and support of practical religion. They should be taught to children, to imbue their minds with early piety. They should be put into the hands of youth, that their characters may be formed in the school of Christ. Men engaged in active life should read them continually, that they may counteract the influence, which their worldly business might otherwise have, to contract their feelings, and corrupt their hearts. And it is to them, that the aged also should go for those supports and consolations, which religion only can give, gilding with the beams of the sun of righteousness the evening of their days. Indeed so fully are we persuaded of the utility and importance of devotional works—so entire is our conviction that they should be numbered among the most powerful of those religious excitements, by which the slumbers of the thoughtless are to be broken, and the consciences of the vicious to be alarmed—that we cannot refrain from expressing our regret, that there are so few books of this description which we can recommend, without qualification. Some, however, there are, and it is also a subject of extreme regret, that these are not more generally known and read. Law's *Serious call to a devout and holy life* ; Thomas a Kempis, *On the Imitation of Christ* ; Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man* ; *Holy Living and Dying*, by Jeremy Taylor ; and Hannah More's *Practical Piety* ;—these are all works of acknowledged merit, and works which we can recommend with very little abatement of that praise, which Christians of all persuasions, have almost unanimously lavished upon them. What then shall we say of Mrs. Barbauld's *Hymns for Children* ; Merivale's *Daily devotions for the Closet* ; the *Devotional Discourses* of Newcome Cappe ; and the *Sermons* of our late lamented Buckminster—books easily to be obtained—books

which deserve the highest praise ; and of which it would not be too much to say, they should always be found lying by the side of our Bibles, that we may recur to them continually, to deepen our religious impressions, to strengthen our holy resolutions, and to fill our minds with the consolations and hopes of religion. "By the frequent reading of such books," says Bishop Burnet, "by the relish that one has in them, by the delight they give, and the effects they produce, a man will plainly perceive whether his soul is made for divine matters or not ; what suitability there is between him and them, and whether he is yet touched with such a sense of religion as to be capable of dedicating himself to it."

If any of our readers have yet to make themselves acquainted with the books we have mentioned, we earnestly request them to do it without delay. By neglecting it they will do themselves and their families an injustice for which it may not be in their power to atone ; they may do themselves and their families an injury, which ages will not repair.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

GENTLEMEN,—It is very possible that you do not know with what religious abhorrence certain of your doctrines are regarded by orthodox believers ; or of what communion *they* are thought worthy "who privily bring in such damnable heresies." For your information in that particular, I send you the following extracts from the sermons of a distinguished Doctor of Divinity now living and preaching in the State of New York.

"The sentiment may be unpopular ; it may be branded as illiberal ; yet, supported by the word of God, I am emboldened to utter it, that *the Prince of darkness is as worthy of our communion and countenance, as the man who persists deliberately, wilfully, and avowedly, to deny the Deity of our Lord.*"

Again ;

"*The finite mind cannot expand to conceive the complicated blasphemies which are necessarily involved in the denial of this doctrine.*" PROUDFIT'S Works, vol. i. p. 361.

C. J.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

SINCERITY.

“IF the *show* of any thing, be good for any thing, I am sure *sincerity* is better ; for why does any man dissemble, or seem to be that which he is not, but because he thinks it good to have such a quality as he pretends to ? For to counterfeit and dissemble, is to put on the appearance of some real excellency. Now the best way in the world to *seem* to be any thing, is *really to be* what he would seem to be. Besides that it is many times as troublesome to make good the pretence of a good quality, as to have it ; and if a man have it not, it is ten to one but he is discovered to want it ; and then all his pains and labour to seem to have it, are lost.”

Letter to Bishop WATSON, from a young man who had read his Defence of Christianity.

SIR,—Unknown as I am to your Lordship, permit me to express my obligation for your labours in the cause of Christianity, and the benefit I in particular have derived from them—inestimable indeed.

Young and inexperienced, by the impious jests and contagious example of profligate associates, I at length abandoned the religious principles in which I had been early instructed, and with sorrow confess, imbibed those of infidelity. In this deplorable situation I met with your *Theological Tracts*, and *Apology for Christianity*. By a careful perusal of both, I am overpowered with evidence and conviction : so that with me the truth of our holy religion stands on a foundation infinitely firmer than that of any remote fact whatever ; it is the power of God unto salvation.

In consequence of this happy change, I hope I am solicitous to conform my practice to the divine precepts of the gospel ; for I have lately complied with our blessed Saviour's dying command.

Under divine influence, your writings have been powerfully efficacious in dissipating the gloom of scepticism, in which I was once so involved. But plain and unlearned as I am, gratitude must supersede encomium. I, however, sincerely pray,

that you may at least receive an approbation the most significant, "Well done, enter into the joy of your Lord," when, in the noble language of scripture, "they who have turned many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

I have the honor to be, &c.

* * * * *

SUICIDE.

A few years ago an officer went into Hyde Park with an intention of shooting himself: he applied a pistol to his forehead, but the priming flashed and no discharge followed. A man of poor appearance, whom the officer had not observed, or perhaps thought unworthy of his notice, instantly ran up, and wrested the pistol from his hands. The other drew his sword, and was about to stab his deliverer, who with much spirit replied, "Stab me, Sir, if you think proper. I fear death as little as you, but I have more courage. More than twenty years I have lived in affliction and penury, and I yet trust in God for mercy and support." The officer was struck (as well he might be) with these reproving words, continued speechless and motionless for a short time, and then bursting into tears, gave his purse to the honest man. He then inquired into his story, and became his private friend and benefactor; but under a solemn injunction, that he would never make any inquiries concerning himself, or seem to know him, if chance should ever bring them again in sight of each other. How many suicides might be prevented, and how many miseries relieved, if men under the pressure of their adversity would learn from this poor man to "trust in God for comfort and support."*

LINES TO A CHILD

ON HIS VOYAGE TO FRANCE, TO MEET HIS FATHER.

Lo, how impatiently upon the tide
The proud ship tosses, eager to be free.
Her flag streams wildly, and her fluttering sails
Pant to be on their flight. A few hours more,
And she will move in stately grandeur on,
Cleaving her path majestic through the flood,
As if some living goddess of the deep.

* Moore's Enquiry into Suicide.

O, 'tis a thought sublime, that man can force
 A path upon the waste; can find a way
 Where all is trackless, and compel the winds,
 Those freest agents of Almighty power,
 To lend their untamed wings, and bear him on
 To distant climes. Thou, William, still art young
 And dost not see the wonder. Thou wilt tread
 The buoyant deck, and look upon the flood,
 Unconscious of the high sublimity,
 As 'twere a common thing—thy soul unawed,
 Thy childish sports unchecked : while thinking *me*
 Shrinks back into himself—himself so mean
 'Mid things so vast,—and, wrapt in deepest awe,
 Bends to the might of that mysterious Power,
 Who holds the waters in his hand, and guides
 The ungovernable winds.—'Tis not in man
 To look unmoved upon that heaving waste,
 Which, from horizon to horizon spread,
 Meets the o'er arching heavens on every side,
 Blending their hues in distant faintness there.

'Tis wonderful!—and yet, my boy, just such
 Is life. Life is a sea as fathomless,
 As wide, as terrible, and yet sometimes
 As calm and beautiful. The light of Heaven
 Smiles on it, and 'tis decked with every hue
 Of glory and of joy : Ah, dark clouds
 Arise, contending winds of fate go forth,
 And hope sits weeping o'er a general wreck.

And thou must sail upon this sea, a long
 Eventful voyage. The wise *may* suffer wreck,
 The foolish *must*. O then be early wise !
 Learn from the mariner his skilful art
 To ride upon the waves, and catch the breeze,
 And dare the threatening storm, and trace a path
 'Mid countless dangers, to the destined port
 Unerringly secure. O learn from him
 To station quick eyed Prudence at the helm,
 To guard thy sail from Passion's sudden blasts,
 And make firm Principle thy magnet guide,
 Which points forever with the light of Heaven.

Farewell—Heaven smile propitious on thy course,
 And favoring breezes waft thee to the arms
 Of love paternal.—Yes, and more than this—
 Blest be thy passage o'er the changing sea
 Of life ; the clouds be few that intercept
 The light of joy ; the waves roll gently on
 Beneath thy bark of hope, and bear thee safe
 To meet in peace thine other Father,—God.

June, 4, 1818.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE XIV.

Moral Sketches of prevailing Opinions and Manners foreign and domestic : with Reflections on Prayer. By HANNAH MORE. From the London Edition. Boston : Wells and Lilly. 12mo. pp. 208.*

It is impossible to take up a book written by this distinguished woman without feelings of great respect. She has been devoting her time and talents during a long life to the religious improvement of her fellow christians. She has laboured assiduously from first to last for this one great object. She has striven to be not merely innocent in her occupations, but useful ; she has not thought it enough, to do no harm by the books she has sent out into the world, but has conscientiously attempted by all of them to do good. The high praise is her's, of having uniformly intended the best. This none can doubt, however some may question the real value of her writings.— And she has her reward, in still being, in a good old age, one of the most admired and popular of religious writers. It is no small reward to be able to look back from the close of a long pilgrimage, and see its whole course marked with praiseworthy efforts in the cause of religion ; to know that many have received from her, not in vain, admonition, counsel and comfort ; that she has helped to correct and form many characters ; and aided in staying the stream of corruption that was deluging society, and in upholding the firm barrier of religious principle ;—to see, too, that her labors are not forgotten nor slighted, but are every where acknowledged with the full meed of praise and veneration.

We have much of this feeling ourselves. We highly appreciate her services ; we admire the apparent depth and ardor of her piety ; we respect one who maintains so rigid a system of christian morals, and pleads so strongly for *consistency* in faith and practice. But we cannot avoid thinking, notwithstanding, that her merits have been greatly exaggerated, and

* Wells & Lilly have also published a superior edition in two small volumes, 18mo.

that the encomiums lavished upon her have oftentimes been extravagant. There is a great deal of fashion, even in religion; and when one has been set up as a saint and an oracle, every one calls him so without knowing or inquiring why. It is not to be suspected, no, not for a moment, that he has any faults. In the present case, something is perhaps to be attributed to the sex of the author. Something of her popularity may be owing, too, to the popularity of the system she is known to support,—for we all love to read those, whom we know to be right because they agree with us. Much has been owing to the very severity and rigidness of her principles; for men are ready to affix a notion of something almost supernatural to any extraordinary sanctity. And not a little is to be attributed to qualities in her style of writing, which are striking and dazzling, though not altogether in good taste;—to her imposing emphasis and occasional bombast; her perpetual sententiousness, and love of antithesis. No one will understand us to say, that these circumstances affect the *moral merits* of her works; but we are quite certain that they have insensibly operated to increase their worth in the estimation of many.

As we shall probably never have another opportunity, we must be permitted now to speak more largely, than we should otherwise do, of the general defects and merits of one, who has so much attracted the attention of the religious public. With respect, then, to her faults as a writer, they are so great, that we hazard little in saying, that she cannot be permanently popular. They are sustained now by personal associations with her name and character and connexions, vivid in the minds of this generation, but which must be lost in the next,—and with them will be lost the charm of her eloquence and the power of her remonstrances. With them will be removed the veil which has concealed her imperfections, and she will be forgotten. This age owes her much—the next must owe the same to another. All will perceive then, what many complain of now, that her arrangement in the treatment of subjects is so entangled and obscure, that the memory can bring away little; oftentimes, in fact, she has nothing of method. What she herself says of a particular chapter in the work before us, is equally true of her writings in general. “It consists rather of miscellaneous observations on a variety of topics, than in an attempt at a systematic view of religion or morals.” Her essays frequently present no *train* of thought at all; the reader is not conscious of any progress; he is led about and about through a wilderness of fine sentences, and sparkling thoughts, and striking appeals, and when he comes to the end, can neither

tell where he has been wandering, nor show any thing which he has brought away. However much she may have impressed us while we were reading, there is no author of whom we remember less. Then, she is too much given to writing *for effect*; she is all the time striving to make an *impression*. We acknowledge she sometimes admirably succeeds; but the attempt is too apparent; we see that she meant to strike, to dazzle, to overwhelm; and we become wearied by the appearance of unintermitted effort. She is extravagantly fond of figurative writing; she sometimes obscures the sense by an ill judged metaphor, where plain talking would have been better; and sometimes utterly disconcerts us by a mixture of the figurative and the literal. Indeed she has less than could be wished of that simplicity, which is so necessary in the serious matters of religion, and which is one of the principal things that give so much power to Law's Serious Call.—She is too fond of bringing every thing to a *point*; she is “ambitiously sententious;” she would have every other sentence a proverb. She is in love with assertions that sound like paradoxes; and is perpetually stringing together antitheses, one after another; in the last of which, that crowns the climax, she is sometimes obliged to use strange words for which the reader must consult his dictionary. In a word, we think her faults in prose are very much the same with those of Young in poetry; and her excellencies too. They have both the same strain of deep, and solemn, and affecting feeling; the same rich fund of fine imposing and striking thought; and the same rage for antithesis, and point, and happy turns of expression that shall startle you like an epigram.

But enough of her faults; especially as they refer so much to the mere manner. We did not know how to omit the notice of them, and are glad to dismiss them. Examples of them may be readily found by those who think it worth while to look for them; to adduce them here would be to encumber our few pages to no profit. We have higher objects than this sort of criticism; though we were willing to give one moment to it, that we might explain how it is that so many serious people of cultivated minds and taste take no pleasure in the works of so popular a writer. Having accomplished this, we shall reserve what we may have to say concerning faults of sentiment, till we speak particularly of the work before us. They are such as are little likely to injure in any way those who can read her pages with interest. She confines herself almost exclusively to practical Christianity, to vital and experimental religion, which rests on those large principles which are common to believers of every name. She has little hostility to any errors,

but those which lie in a bad heart, and little zeal for any truth, that is not manifested to be truth by its good influence over the conscience, the dispositions, and the life.

We pass gladly therefore to subjects of praise. And—to finish at once all that we have to say about her manner of communicating thought—some of her excellencies are those of style. She has a peculiar felicity of expression when a bold and powerful statement is to be made to stand out from the page. She can be very forcible and pointed and pungent. She excels in hitting off a character at a single stroke, and drawing a full description in few words.

She oftentimes describes classes of men with very great felicity: telling their imperfections and displaying their inconsistencies with unsparing hand, and thus administering, in fine satire, the most wholesome admonition and reproof. In the volume before us is the following sketch of a certain class, whom she very aptly calls *the Phraseologists*.

“These are persons who, professing to believe the whole of the Gospel, seem to regard only one half of it. They stand quite in opposition to the useful and laborious class whom we last considered. None will accuse these of that virtuous excess, of that unwearied endeavour to promote the good of others, on which we there animadverted. These are assiduous hearers, but indifferent doers; very valiant talkers for the truth, but remiss workers. They are more addicted to hear sermons, than to profit by them.

“Their religion consists more in a sort of spiritual gossiping, than in holiness of life. They diligently look out after the faults of others, but are rather lenient to their own. They accuse of being legal, those who act more in the service of Christianity, and dispute less about certain opinions. They overlook essentials, and debate rather fiercely on, at best, doubtful points of doctrine; and form their judgment of the piety of others, rather from their warmth in controversy, than in their walking humbly with God.

“They always exhibit in their conversation the idiom of a party, and are apt to suspect the sincerity of those whose higher breeding, and more correct habits, discover a better taste. Delicacy with them, is want of zeal; prudent reserve, want of earnestness; sentiments of piety, conveyed in other words than are found in their vocabulary, are suspected of error. They make no allowance for the difference of education, habits, and society: all must have one standard of language, and that standard is their own.

“Even if, on some points, you hold nearly the same sentiments, it will not save your credit; if you do not express them in the same language, you are in danger of having your principles suspected. By your deficiency or declension in this dialect, and not by the greater or less devotedness of your heart, the increasing or diminishing consistency in your practice, they take the gauge of your religion, and determine the rise and fall of your spiritual thermometer. The language of these technical Christians indisposes persons of refinement, who have not had the advantage of seeing religion under a more engaging form, to serious piety, by leading them to make a most unjust association between religion and bad taste.

"When they encounter a new acquaintance of their own school, these reciprocal signs of religious intelligence produce an instantaneous sisterhood; and they will run the chance of what the character of the stranger may prove to be, if she speaks in the vernacular tongue. With them, words are not only the signs of things, but things themselves.

"If the phraseologists meet with a well-disposed young person, whose opportunities are slender, and to whom religion is new, they alarm her by the impetuosity of their questions. They do not examine if her principles are sound, but "does she pray extempore?" This alarms her, if her too recent knowledge of her Bible and herself has not yet enabled her to make this desirable proficiency. "Will she tell her experience?" These interrogations are made without regard to that humility which may make her afraid to appear better than she is, and to that modesty which restrains a loud expression of her feelings. She does not, perhaps, even know the meaning of the term, in their acceptance of it.

"Do we then ridicule experimental religion? Do we think lightly of that interior power of Divine grace upon the heart, which is one of the strongest evidences of the truth of Christianity? God forbid! But surely we may disapprove the treating it with flippancy and unhallowed familiarity; we may disapprove of their discussing it with as little reserve and seriousness, as if they were speaking of the state of the weather, or of the hour of the day; we may object to certain equivocal feelings being made the sole criterion of religion—feelings to which those who have them not may pretend,—which those who have them may fear to communicate, before they have acquired a strength and permanency which may make them more decisive; we may blame such injudicious questions to incipient Christians, who barely know the first elements of Christianity."—pp. 127—130.

As this is an example of her judicious observation of *character*, so others might be brought to show her intimate knowledge of the *heart*. She is peculiarly fitted by this knowledge for the kind of writing to which she has devoted herself—the great object of which is to lay open men's bosoms and shew them to themselves, that they may see the necessity of a system of strict watchfulness. She appears to have made the human heart her study; she has minutely acquainted herself with its variety of operations, its use of motives, its secret biases, its slippery evasions, and is able to follow them all up till she detects and exposes them. She has a perfect understanding of the multifarious equivocations of conscience respecting duty, and a curious skill in anticipating and defeating the excuses which will be brought by the unwilling, the indolent, and the slaves of habit. To use a phrase that is well understood, she is very close and searching; she gets the soul, as it were, into her power, and she pursues it through every shifting and turning in its attempt to escape, as perseveringly as it is represented to be pursued by Death, in Blair's poem of *the Grave*:

—the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement,

Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
But shrieks in vain—

the foe
Pursues her close through every lane of life,
Nor misses once the track, but presses on.

In connexion with this feature in her character as a writer, may be mentioned her very rigid principles of morals, and her exalted, unbending notions of the standard of christian excellence. Few place so high the requisitions of duty, or allow so little to the excuses of Christians for their imperfections, and their compliances with the customs of the world, and the inconsistency of their practice with their faith, or of one part of their practice with another. She does not admit any degree of indulgence, which is merely indulgence; and insists, strenuously and decidedly, that nothing is to determine a Christian to act except the certain conviction—the well grounded and intelligent, not the careless conviction,—that it is right, that it is the will of God. Nothing is to be done, which will not bear to be examined by this principle. It will not do to compromise; it will not do to hesitate; whatever is not unquestionably right, is unquestionably wrong and sinful. It is not remarkable that one should *say* this; but it is a little remarkable that one should in all cases rigidly and consistently adhere to it. Others state such a principle in the abstract; but do not strictly abide by it; in its application they permit a thousand deviations; and so explain it away as to pronounce many things innocent, which, actually tried by this principle, would not be innocent; and, indeed, might perhaps be amongst the first to laugh at the scrupulosity of one, who should fetter himself by it in his whole conduct. But in Mrs. More there is no such deviation; she brings all her remarks, rules, and illustrations upon every subject to this point; she never loses sight of it; and there is, of consequence, a rigid severity every where in her moral requisitions. She demands of the disciples of Jesus a blamelessness of life, an elevation of motive, a spirituality of heart, which are so rarely attained, that many regard them as fanciful; as wearing the air of romance; and hence was the saying of some one, that “her *Practical Piety* contains more piety than can be practised.” But we are persuaded that by this means she affects many others, who would be little affected by the representation of excellence more immediately within their reach; she excites in them ardor of pursuit; creates lofty ideas of the holiness which is possible; and gives an air of meanness and insufficiency to moderate attainments. Many are captivated by excellence when painted as a thing so

extraordinary ; they are emulous of greater things, because greater things are showed them ; and become discontented with a low state of religious attainment, just as the ambitious in letters or in arts, whose imaginations have been inflamed with the idea of some infinite and unlimited excellence, become dissatisfied with all inferior rank, and press on to that indefinite and invisible resting place.

We are especially convinced, that such strong representations of the strictness of christian perfection are important to those, who are first interested in religious things, and just commencing their christian pilgrimage. There appears to be little reason for fearing, that injury may be done them by *over statements* upon this point. The operation of a man's common sense, in this age when common sense is permitted to operate, will prevent it. And the experience in life, which is gained by a little intercourse with men, will soon cause all extravagance to settle down into a sober state of rational and fervent piety. We do, therefore, conceive it to be of the utmost importance, that the standard should be set very high at first. The first impressions of religion on the mind should be exceedingly severe and solemn. If they be not so then, when the heart is most susceptible, the conscience most tender, and the desire of doing all that can be done most powerful ; it is to be feared that afterward, when the early ardor is cooled, and the emulation of the novice passed away—the notions of duty will become loose and confused, the impressions of responsibility weakened, and the standard of attainment low. Many there are, satisfied to be stationary in great imperfection, because they were never made to be in love with perfection. We therefore do not think it possible to do too much to impress the young Christian with a strong feeling of the vastness of the height he has to climb, and to give birth within him to an earnest and determined desire to arrive at its summit. It is better that he should feel too much than too little. The enthusiasm of the young convert always cools with time, and soberer views occupy him. And if his first views were but *just sufficiently sober*, they will never be very animated and may be very feeble. It is hardly possible they should increase, but very probable that they will decrease.

Our author's strict notions of consistency and perfection in duty, are united with equally high sentiments respecting the piety which is due to God, and the spirit of devotion in which the mind of man should always be maintained. The duty of prayer is, with her, the first and crowning duty ; that which prompts all the rest, and sanctifies all the rest, and without which the rest are

altogether insufficient. The connexion of the soul with its Maker is so necessary, so near, and so sacred, that nothing can be done by a Christian without the recollection of it; and no act of the mind, no motive of the conduct, can be in any proper sense *Christian*, which is not hallowed and directed by the principle of piety,—by the appeal to God. Half of the present work treats upon this subject, and topics connected with it. In her other works it is frequently treated; and perhaps she has not written a chapter upon any religious subject, in which it is not recognized and acknowledged—certainly, implied—as the one thing needful.

In her representations, however, of the strictness of christian duty, we have been often sensible of a faultiness, which we do not know how to express in other words than by saying, they are indefinite, vague, somewhat mystical. The impressions she leaves are not always sufficiently distinct. She gives you a feeling of awe, and urges you, with a solemnity that makes you tremble, to do something—but does not tell you, in so many words, what it is. She oftentimes writes thus, paragraph after paragraph, leaving upon your imagination nothing more than a general and confused idea of some tremendous responsibility. In practical writings this is surely a great fault. So far as regards the *practice* of religion, there is certainly little worth in that which you cannot define—which cannot be made palpable; for it amounts to nothing more than a certain solemnity of feeling, which is not necessarily followed by action, and may exist in a very bad man. You cannot be too plain, direct, explicit in every thing which relates to practical piety, and christian morals; duty should be so defined and laid before men that they cannot evade or equivocate. And after all, the great difficulty lies in the performance of plain direct precepts. He is not really the strictest Christian, who loves to be touched by eloquent appeals to his conscience, and to have his heart wrung, and his emotions excited; but he, who never swerves in his conduct from rigid principle, and who is never drawn aside by temptations from exact adherence to the rules, which are well defined, and of no uncertain interpretation.

The work now before us, in which the author takes “her final leave of her readers,” is strongly marked by the characteristics which we have mentioned, but is not equal in merit to some of the efforts of her younger days. The portion of the volume, which is entitled *Moral Sketches*, is partly occupied in bewailing the demoralizing consequences of that frequent intercourse between the Continent and England, and especially of that intimacy with the society of Paris, which has followed the gene-

ral peace in Europe. She expresses herself upon this point with great energy of feeling, and with most solemn forebodings of the religious and moral evils, which must flow from this unholy familiarity of the sons of God with the daughters of men. She fears much, and the cry of her fear is eloquent. The other part of the 'Sketches' is occupied with equally earnest expostulations respecting the secession which has recently taken place from the established Church, and the multifarious religious evils, which, in her opinion, have arisen out of it.—These topics are principally of local interest; but they compose by far the finest part of the work, and even in this country may be read with pleasure and improvement. Some of the chapters, indeed, under these heads, are of universal application, and may be equally valuable to Christians of every nation and church. Such, for example, is the following passage; which we quote from a chapter on *Soundness in judgment*, as a specimen of her good sense when she is least ambitious to be fine.

"There is one thing we would more particularly press on the important class we are now taking the liberty to address; it is the cultivation of a sound judgment. Of all persons, religious persons are most bound to cultivate this precious faculty."

"Judgment is to the faculties of the mind, what charity is to the virtues of the heart; as without charity the latter are of little worth, so without judgment talents are of little comparative use."

"Judgment is so far from being a cooler of zeal, as some suppose, that it increases its effect by directing its movements; and a warm heart will always produce more extensive, because more lasting good, when conducted by a cool head.

"We speak of this attribute the more positively, because it is one which, more than many others, depends on ourselves. A sound judgment, indeed, is equally bestowed with other blessings by Him from whom cometh every good gift; yet it is not, like the other faculties of the mind, so much born with us, as improved by us. By teaching us to discern the faults of others, it warns us to avoid them; by detecting our own, it leads to their cure. The deepest humility is generally connected with the soundest judgment. The judicious Christian is watchful against speculative errors, as well as against errors in conduct. He never adopts any opinion because it is new, nor any practice because it is fashionable; neither does he, if it be innocent reject the latter merely for that reason. Judgment is, in short, that quality of the mind which requires to be kept in ever wakeful activity; and the advantages it procures us, and the evils from which it preserves us, will be more apparent, the more it is kept in exercise.

"Religious charity more especially demands the full exercise of the judgment. A judicious Christian will double the good done, by his selection of the object, and his manner of relieving it. All things that are good are not equally good. A sound judgment discriminates between the value of the claimants which present themselves, and bestows on them more or less attention, according to their respective claims.

"Above all, an enlightened judgment will enable you to attain and to preserve CONSISTENCY, that infallible criterion of a highly finished Christian character, the want of which makes some really religious persons not a

little vulnerable. It was this want in some of his people, which led an eminent divine, at once a man of deep piety and lively wit, to say, that "there were some good persons, with whom it would be time enough to be acquainted in heaven." So much to be regretted is it, that goodness of intention is not always attended by propriety in the execution.

"In another class, the want of consistency makes not a few appear over scrupulous as to some minor points, and lax in others of more importance. These incongruities not only bring the individual into discredit, but religion into disgrace. When the world sees persons, whose views are far from high, act more consistently with *their* avowed views, and frequently more above them, than some whose religion professes to be of a loftier standard, they will prefer the lower, as exhibiting fewer discrepancies, and less obvious contradictions.

"In the more advanced Christian, religion may seem to be less prominent in parts of the character, because it is infused into the whole. Like the life-blood, its vital power pervades the entire system: not an action of the life that is not governed by it; not a quality of the mind which does not partake of its spirit. It is diffused through the whole conduct, and sheds its benign influence, not only on the things done, but on the temper of the doer in performing them. The affections now have other objects, the time other duties, the thoughts other employments. There will be more exertion, but with less display; less show, because the principle is become more interior; it will be less obtrusive, because it is more rooted and grounded. There will be more humility, because the heart will have found out its own corruptions." pp. 72—76.

The second part of this work is entitled, *Reflections on Prayer*. It has many striking expressions, and impressive paragraphs, but is less interesting as a whole than the former part. Of her sentiments on this subject a few extracts will give sufficient information.

"They, therefore, who most insist on the value of stated devotions, must never lose sight of that grand, and universal prime truth, that wherever we are, still we are in God's presence; whatever we have is His gift; whatever we hope is His promise; feelings which are commensurate with all time, all places, and limited to no particular scenes or seasons.

"There is in some, in many it is to be feared, a readiness to acknowledge this general doctrine, which mis-called natural religion teaches; but who are far from including in their system the peculiarities, the duties, the devotions of Christianity. These are decorous men of the world, who, assuming the character of philosophical liberality, value themselves on having shaken off the shackles of prejudice, superstition, and system.—They acknowledge a Creator of the universe, but it is in a vague and general way. They worship a Being, 'whose temple is all space;' that is, every where but in the human heart. They put Him as far as possible from themselves. Believing that he has no providential care of them, they feel no personal interest in Him. God and nature are with them synonymous terms. That the creation of the world was His work, they do not go the length of denying; but that its government is in His hands, is with them very problematical." p. 184.

"But too many deceive themselves, by imagining that when they have pronounced their prayer, the duty is accomplished with the task, the occult medicine being taken, the charm is to work of itself. They consider

it as a duty quite distinct and unconnected with any other. They forget that it is to produce in them a principle which is to mix with all the occurrences of the day. Prayer, though not intended as a talisman, is yet proposed as a remedy. The effect of its operation is to be seen in assisting to govern the temper, in bridling the tongue, in checking, not only calumny but levity, not only impure, but vain conversation.

"But we have a wonderful talent at deceiving ourselves. We have not a fault for which we do not find an apology. Our ingenuity on this head is inexhaustible. In matters of religion men complain that they are weak, a complaint they are not forward to urge in worldly matters. They lament that their reluctance to pray arises from being unable to do what God, in his word, expects them to do. But is not this virtual rebellion, only with a smooth face and a soft name? God is too wise not to know exactly what we can do, and too just to expect from us what we cannot." p. 204.

"But to return.—Though we must not, in accommodation to the prevailing prejudices and unnecessary zeal against abstinence and devotion, neglect the imperative duties of retirement, prayer, and meditation; yet, perhaps, as prayer makes so indispensable an article in the Christian life, some retired, contemplative persons may apprehend that it makes the whole; whereas prayer is only the operation which sets the machine going. It is the sharpest spur to virtuous action, but not the act itself. The only infallible incentive to a useful life, but not a substitute for that usefulness. Religion keeps her children in full employment. It finds them work for every day in the week, as well as on Sundays.

"The praying Christian, on going into the world, feels that his social and religious duties are happily comprised in one brief sentence—'I will think upon thy commandments to do them.' What the Holy Spirit has so indissolubly joined, he does not separate." p. 271.

Here we take leave of our author; and, in all probability, as she has taken of her readers, a final leave. We are glad to have had this opportunity of bearing testimony to her merits, and of saying, at the same time, that her works are far from deserving unmingled approbation. We have therefore spoken of her with respect, and yet with freedom. We have attempted, and we hope not unsuccessfully, to exhibit a fair outline of her merits and her failings; we have set them side by side, without intentional exaggeration of the one, or designed concealment of the other. And when the balance is fairly struck, we think the christian world will agree with us in the opinion, that, notwithstanding her undoubted claim to the gratitude of the religious community; her reputation is not founded upon qualities that will endure, and that it will pass away when she is gone;—But the good she has done will remain, and she probably cares little for immortality on earth, if she can secure it in Heaven.

ARTICLE XV.

Affection's Gift to a Beloved Godchild. By M. H. From the London Edition. Boston, Wells and Lilly. 1819. 16mo. pp. 148.

THIS little book contains a series of letters from a God-mother to a young woman just in the entrance of life, upon many important points of manners and morals. It is not very profound or eloquent, and we might wish perhaps that it were a little more forcible. It would be better too if fewer topics had been treated, that they might be treated more at length, and, of consequence, more instructively. But considered merely as a book of hints, designed to call back to the mind of a young person from time to time an older friend's advice; and accompanied, as such a present is supposed to be and ought to be, by the authority and influence of the friend who gives; it may be of considerable value, and do much good. Such a book is frequently wanted. We give counsel to our young friends, and strive to guide them in the regulation of their hearts and the choice of their employments. But we often wish that we had something more durable to trust to, than the words which pass our lips and are so easily forgotten. We wish that we could be sure of the advice being occasionally recalled to their thoughts. Such a book as this enables us to do it. We put it into their hands, and say to them—the instructions which impress you now, may easily be lost if you be at no pains to keep them. Take therefore this book; it is small, but it contains sufficient to refresh your memory and to revive the good purposes of your heart. Read these letters as if I had written them expressly for yourself. Here is my advice; you may always repeat to yourself what I would say, by looking here. By this book I am present with you—let it have all the influence of my presence.

The letters are twenty three in number. The general topics are, Religion, the improvement of the Mind, the regulation of the Heart and Affections, and the Accomplishments of life. A few short extracts will enable our readers to judge for themselves of the manner of the writer. The subject of Religion is dismissed much too hastily. It may be said, however, in excuse, that it is always kept in view in the treatment of other topics, and the following passage will show that it is touched with proper seriousness and correct views.

"It is this divine principle which fosters the best sensibilities of our nature, at the same time that it corrects and regulates them; which furnishes the fittest objects for their exercise, and the plainest boundaries for their limitation. Thus you perceive, my dear girl, that religion must be a *cheerful* principle: for, by regulating the passions, improving the heart, expanding the mind, and softening the disposition it *cannot but produce* that most desirable of all results, peace of soul, and a contented mind.

"Thus far I have endeavoured to enforce its importance, in reference to your *temporal* happiness. But how will that importance rise in your mind, when you reflect, that by it *alone* you can hope for that which is to be *eternal*.

"Seriously reflect, my beloved child, that before we can enjoy happiness, the mind must be prepared to receive it—that there is no transmuting power in death—that unless we habituate the soul to virtue, and to piety *here*, and endeavour to attain a relish for those enjoyments which we are promised in heaven, even *there* happiness would be unknown to us.

"The germs of the qualities which are to flourish through the endless ages of eternity, must be cultivated with constant and with tender care, during this scene of our probation.

"Let this reflection sink deep into your mind, and it will be unnecessary for me to urge the subject more. Let the study of the Holy Scriptures be your daily employment, and you cannot fail to find in them delight; but recollect, they are not to be pursued merely to be believed, and remembered, and held in *speculative* reverence; but as the grand, the only means under divine grace, of producing in your heart that awe of the Almighty, that reverence of his majesty, that delight in his infinite perfections, and of his immutable attributes, and that affectionate knowledge of him, which will, which *can* alone constitute your *rest*—your *peace*—your *strength*—your *consolation*.

There is not here the force and eloquence of Bishop Watson's "Address to young Persons"—which is probably by far the best book of this sort; but we are not to judge of its value by such a comparison, but by regarding it, as we said above, as designed to recal former advice and revive the impressions of personal admonition. By the same remark we are to judge of passages like this relating to the regulation of the heart.

"The first step towards resisting temptation, is to regulate our notions; for before we can *act* virtuously, we must learn to *think* justly. The excursions of the imagination must be checked as its restless nature gives it a power dangerous to our virtue and our peace; it deludes us into a false estimation of things, arraying them with fascinations which produce an insatiable desire to possess them; till, as it is most justly observed, "the balance of the soul is lost." Endeavour to keep alive in your mind the sense of its bewildering nature, and suffer it not to overbear your judgment; endeavour to fix the intrinsic value of the objects it presents, and learn to estimate them aright. A habit of recurring to reflection will be one of the strongest barriers against the inroads of error; the most effectual mode of confining your irregular wishes within due bounds. By watching the first motions, you will learn to *suppress* the first risings of such wishes—you must assert the natural power of reason over the soul, and daily confirm his authority by exercising it on all occasions, however

trivial you may think them: thus will you be insensibly habituated to resist the stronger solicitations which may assail your virtue.

“But my beloved girl will find all these means ineffectual, unless she seeks for internal strength from the FORMER of the heart. Prayer is the high privilege of frail and weak beings; *that only can calm when the tumults of thought arise within, that only can bid the soul be still and rest upon its God!*”

And of Sensibility—which is one of the finest letters in the book.

“There are so many counterfeits of the quality which forms the subject of my present letter, and it has been in so many instances perverted from its genuine meaning, *that the term itself has been brought into disgrace; yet it is in its simple beauty, one of the greatest ornaments of our sex, as well as the source of our most amiable virtues.*”

“Sensibility, as far as concerns ourselves alone, is liable to equal perversions and certainly to far superior mischiefs. It may be so misdirected and distempered as to bewilder us in the paths of error, if it does not hurry us to the precipice of guilt. It may be so refined as to render us ill calculated to meet the disappointments, to bear the coarseness and unfeeling judgments, to which our situation in life may expose us.”

“Sensibility, to give worth to the character, to be the perfume which sheds its fragrance on our severer virtues, must be sustained by reason, and founded upon principle.—It is an observation of that virtuous and great man, *Nickar*, that ‘There must be a conductor to the electric fluid, and one is equally wanted to the ethereal flame of the imagination.’ This observation is perfectly appropriate to the subject under review.

“Study therefore, my dear Girl, to obtain that command over your sensibility, that it may never rise above the pleasing participation in the joys, or the sympathy with, and the active relief of your suffering fellow beings, which I have endeavoured to enforce upon your attention; and you will assuredly feel that internal peace, a greater blessing than which I cannot wish you.”

We should not do justice to the writer, if we did not quote part of the conclusion.

“The virtues I have enforced are all perfectly practicable; the employments, the accomplishments equally so, to a diligent and active mind. The Affections will prove their own reward, if with the Passions, they are vigilantly guarded. But I have not deceived you by saying, it requires no effort to be virtuous; all things worthy of attainment, both in the moral and natural world, must be won by attention and diligence.

“I have made religion the basis of my plan, for futile indeed is human reason without its aid! The lessons I have learned in the school of life have been severe; may you, by reading the reflections which have resulted, be warned, without encountering the sorrow experienced by your friendly monitor.”

ARTICLE XVI.

A Poem, on the pleasures and advantages of True Religion: delivered before the United Brothers' Society, in Brown University, on their Anniversary, August 31, 1819. By REV. DANIEL HUNTINGTON, A.M. Providence: 1819. pp. 24.

A POEM in the measure of Spenser, and upon a subject exclusively religious, delivered on the anniversary of a literary society, is quite a novelty. It is almost a novelty from the press; and we therefore take it up, that we may give our pages a variety which they cannot often have. We are the more ready to do this, as we are persuaded that the extracts we shall make will give pleasure to our readers. For although the poem contains no very lofty flights of imagination, nor descriptions and bursts of feeling that stir and overpower; nor is free from obvious blemishes; yet it is a pleasant, chaste, and respectable production; commendable for its easy flow of harmonious versification, and passages of occasional vigor and beauty. It is, as the title indicates, entirely religious. No digression breaks its unity or interrupts its impression. The solemn majesty of the stanza is well adapted to the seriousness of the subject. Mr. H., in spite of its difficulty, manages it with considerable felicity; except that he appears imperfectly to understand the structure of the closing line.

The introduction contains an apology, or reasons, for the choice of such a subject. We give our readers the third stanza.

III.

“Not mine the aim a vacant mind t’ amuse,
And please the idle with an idle lay:
Well might the wise and fair a song refuse,
Which would but cheat their precious hours away.
Truth is the Genius of our happy day,
To her my humble off’ring let me bring,
In measure that bespeaks her sober sway,
The while a weak and trembling hand I fling
O’er Spenser’s ancient lyre, with long resounding string.”

The pleasures of religion, both in retirement and in action, are depicted in the following stanzas.

XIII.

"O happy hours to pure devotion giv'n,
 When, on the wings of faith, their spirits rise,
 To hold exalted intercourse with Heav'n,
 And bow before the Monarch of the skies!
 How fair, when earth's delusive vision flies,
 Yon land of promise swells in distant view;
 Where Love's full fount unfailing joy supplies,
 Where Eden's bow'rs their forfeit* sweets renew,
 And all is pure and peaceful, all sincere and true!

XIV.

Nor less the pious pleasures that attend
 His daily walk of active usefulness,
 Who, like his heav'nly Master, Man's best Friend,
 Lives but to love, and loving, lives to bless.
 Untaught each [the] gen'rous impulse to suppress,
 By worldly maxims, and by selfish fears.
 A nobler aim his kindly deeds confess:
 Heav'n's bounty with the poor he freely shares,
 And soothes the widow's grief, and dries the orphan's tears.

XV.

Sweet is the musick of a grateful voice,
 In whose soft accents grief and gladness blend;
 Where pity bids a drooping heart rejoice,
 And helpless mis'ry finds an unsought friend.
 When days are dark and gath'ring clouds impend,
 Who would not every selfish wish forego,
 To act as Heav'n's kind almoner, and send
 Those comforts which the sad alone can know,
 And calm the swelling breast, and hush the voice of wo?"

The description of the religious cottage may be read with pleasure.

XXVI.

"Seest thou yon lonely cottage in the grove—
 With little garden neatly plan'd before—
 Its roof, deep shaded by the elms above,
 Moss-grown and deck'd with velvet verdure o'er?
 Go lift the willing latch—the scene explore—
 Sweet peace, and love, and joy, thou there shalt find:
 For there Religion dwell; whose sacred lore
 Leaves the proud wisdom of the world behind,
 And pours a heav'nly ray on every humble mind.

XXVII.

When the bright morning gilds the eastern skies,
 Up springs the peasant from his calm repose;

* ————— "flowers of Paradise,
 "As yet *unforfeit*:" ————— Young.

Forth to his honest toil he cheerful hies,
 And tastes the sweets of nature as he goes—
 But first, of Sharon's fairest, sweetest Rose,
 He breathes the fragrance, and pours forth the praise :
 Looks to the source whence ev'ry blessing flows,
 Ponders the page which heav'nly truth conveys,
 And to its author's hand commits his future ways.

XXVIII.

Nor yet in solitude his prayers ascend ;
 His faithful partner and their blooming train,
 The precious word with rev'rent minds attend,
 The Heav'n-directed path of life to gain.
 Their voices mingle in the grateful strain—
 The lay of love and joy together sing,
 To Him whose bounty clothes the smiling plain,
 Who spreads the beauties of the blooming spring,
 And tunes the warbling throats that make the vallies ring."

These extracts sufficiently show the unaffected and unambitious character of the poem ; which is not to be noticed as making pretensions to uncommon display of splendid genius ; but simply as an exhibition of religious truths in an engaging form ;—which leads us to regret, that we do not meet with more publications of the same kind.

INTELLIGENCE.

EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

THIS Society was formed in 1807. It was originally confined to the counties of Worcester and Middlesex. Its purpose was to provide the destitute inhabitants of our own country with the means of Christian instruction and moral improvement. Its means were furnished by the annual subscription of its members, the contributions of particular Churches, the donations of a number of Female Cent Societies, and by specific sums given by pious and charitable individuals. To secure the permanent existence of the society, and provide a source for an emergency, \$1000 were early funded, and the interest has annually been added to the principal.

The design of the institution was to be accomplished by the employment of Missionaries and School masters, and by the

distribution of religious and moral publications, school books, &c.* The Trustees commenced their official duties in the conviction, that the utility of charitable Societies depends on the manner in which their purposes are carried into execution, and they adopted their plan on the result of serious deliberation. They supposed, that the ordinary effects of Christianity are to be expected from the stated ministrations of the gospel. In assigning, therefore, the services of their Missionaries, they did not embrace a large district of country and thereby induce the inhabitants of a number of towns to depend merely on occasional preaching; but they selected suitable places, and to these confined the labours of those whom they employed; and they authorized their Missionaries to assure the people, who attended on their ministrations, and who manifested a disposition to maintain the public institutions of our religion, that the Society would aid them in gathering a Church, and supporting a minister. This aid was given in the hope that a Christian society thus assisted, realizing the benefits resulting from the regular administrations of the word and ordinances, would become more united among themselves, and more able and willing to bear the expence of a preached gospel.—The Trustees indulged the expectation, that, by Divine blessing, they might be instrumental in gathering regular Churches, and establishing evangelical ministers in succession among people, who without their assistance must long have been destitute of these blessings. In granting aid to schools, it was the aim of the Trustees to impress the minds of the people of our new settlements, with a just sense of the importance of the literary and Christian education of their children, and to hold up the prospect of assistance to those, who were disposed to make proper exertions for themselves.

In pursuance of this system of measures, the Trustees sought for Missionaries of established reputation, and of a catholic spirit, who in their preaching would dwell on the fundamental doctrines of revelation, and on the unchangeable duties of the Christian character. Several individuals of this description were sent into different places in the District of Maine. These were received with respect; their ministrations attended upon with apparent seriousness, and the warm expressions of gratitude, which were returned, led the Society to believe that good was produced; but for the want of union among the people themselves, no permanent settlement of a minister was effected.

* It has also a committee to receive and appropriate such monies as shall be contributed in aid of foreign missions.

The Town of Ellsworth, and the Plantations of Jackson and Washington, gave a brighter illustration of the advantages of the Evangelical Missionary Society. By the representations of Mr. Brewer, who first preached at Ellsworth, and at the earnest request of that people, the Trustees were induced to make that place the object of particular attention. In 1810, Mr. Peter Nurse, a candidate for the ministry, engaged in a mission to Ellsworth; and at the solicitations of that people, he united the business of a school master with the labours of a preacher. The beneficial effects of his assiduous application to his various duties, soon became apparent in the increasing attention to the institutions of the gospel, in the more general manifestation of the Christian spirit, and in the elevation of the tone of public morals. In his school, Mr. Nurse engaged the love and respect of his scholars; and their improvement rewarded him for his unremitted endeavours. Under his care, numbers both of males and females were educated to become instructors in English schools.

A respectable committee of the town of Ellsworth, in a letter directed to the society, observed, "As your views are disinterested, your highest reward will be to know that your endeavours to do us good are crowned with success; and the extraordinary success of Mr. Nurse's labours among us, is an indisputable test of the utility of confining the labours of one Missionary to one society or neighbourhood. It is our deliberate opinion, that Mr. Nurse has done more good the past year, than ten such Missionaries would have done travelling in the usual manner."

The people of Jackson and Washington Plantations, were assisted by the Society in the support of Mr. Silas Warren, their candidate. His faithful services in the pulpit and the school house, were attended with similar, if not equal success to those of Mr. Nurse. In 1812, the executive committee of the year, by the desire of those interested, made a journey into Maine, and assisted in gathering a Church and ordaining Mr. Nurse at Ellsworth, and Mr. Warren at Jackson. The people of Ellsworth now raised among themselves the greater portion of the salary of their minister, and by the Divine benediction, peace and prosperity continue to attend his ministerial labours.* An act of incorporation being deemed expedient, was obtained from the Legislature of the Commonwealth.

* In 1816 a house of worship was erected at the sole expence of a respectable and liberal minded parishoner, Melatiah Jordan, Esq. It is remarkable that the first services performed in it were the obsequies of the lamented founder.

The society, under the direction of their missionaries and school masters, has distributed many religious and moral publications and school books, and several thousand copies of the catechism compiled by the Worcester Association of ministers. These all were the donations of individuals.

A number of respectable gentlemen, not resident in the counties of Worcester and Middlesex, in 1816, expressed a wish that the society should be opened for the admission of all in the Commonwealth, who approve its plan, and are disposed to promote its objects. The proposal was cordially embraced, and the necessary measures adopted to carry it into effect. A branch society was the last year formed in the District of Maine.

The parent society has recently received important and substantial patronage from Boston and Salem. Thus countenanced by the pious public, and aided by the liberality of the affluent, the Society, lifting up holy hands for the blessings of Heaven, now rise to more extended views and to brighter prospects.

The recent transactions and the present state of the society will appear from the following report of the Board of Trustees, presented in October last.

REPORT.

At a season in which the Christian community is beyond example fruitful in works of benevolence, and in which the hope is raised that the season is fast approaching, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth," the Trustees join the members of the Evangelical Missionary Society in devout acknowledgments, that our Association is allowed to take a humble part in building up the kingdom of the Redeemer.

In seeking for objects most deserving of our charity, and whom upon the uniform principle of our institution, we might aid in the acquirement of Christian knowledge, we are established in the following important facts. A very large part of the newly settled territory in our country remains unfurnished with religious instructors. A field is found, to whose cultivation the combined charities of all the associations formed for the diffusion of a knowledge of the gospel, might be usefully applied. We find but few parts of this wide field which have not occasionally been visited by teachers, commissioned by some of the various classes of Christians. Their visits have been generally transient; their intercourse with the people limited; their instructions too often of a sectarian complexion.

We have, therefore, been left to deplore the disgust and division which have been excited, and the small progress which has been made on communicating consistent and reasonable ideas of the Christian religion, and in promoting the great interests of morality and piety. From the survey we have made, and from the experiment of many succeeding years, we are still more confirmed in the belief, that missionary labour can seldom promise a harvest, unless a particular portion of the vineyard is allotted for cultivation; and the teachers who are employed, in addition to an enlarged charity and habitual piety, are also proficient in general literature, and possess a good fund of theological knowledge.

We consider the instrumentality of this Society in the establishment, during the last year, of the Rev. Mr. Frothingham, at Belfast, in the District of Maine, as a signal smile of divine providence. In him we repose high confidence as a man of knowledge, a sound theologian, a pattern of Christian prudence and charity, and as one who will, by his enlightened and zealous instructions and corresponding example, shed a general lustre on pure and undefiled religion. Some of our members who aided in his installation, give the most encouraging views of the prosperity and prospects of the religious society in that place,* and they will probably stand in no farther need of our charity.

The usual appropriation of \$200, has been made to the Rev. Silas Warren, of Jackson; and the Trustees have a full persuasion of his diligence and fidelity as a minister, and of the success which has attended his endeavours to promote knowledge among the rising generation, and to advance the cause of Christ.

One hundred dollars has been paid Mr. John Barrett for service he has rendered in the vicinity of Belfast. His report gives satisfactory information, that he faithfully executed the duties of his commission, and that he addressed Christians who had a desire to be instructed in the word of life.

As an expression of our sympathy with the Rev. Seth Stetson, of Plymouth, whom we view as an independent inquirer after truth, and who has at heart the honour of the Redeemer and the best interests of his religion, we appropriate towards his support among his own people, \$50.

We have cheerfully met an earnest solicitation from respectable inhabitants of Brooklyn, in Connecticut, that we would aid them in their endeavours for the settlement of the ministry,

* See Christian Disciple, New Series, No. 4, p. 336.

and have employed Mr. David Reed to preach to them for three months.

We invite the friends of our religion to consider the present as a peculiarly favourable season for devising liberal things to spread the knowledge of Christ. Reports from various parts of our land justify the belief, that there is a rapid multiplication of friends to the truth as it is in Jesus. It should animate us to perseverance in our work, that the system we have adopted meets general approbation, and that the ministers we have ordained and the churches we have established, may be referred to as fruits of our labours. We entreat all who are charitable to give us the means of doing still more extensive good, and to join with us in a humble prayer that Christian truth, charity, and righteousness may prevail.

Statement of the Funds of the Evangelical Missionary Society of Massachusetts, Dec. 1, 1819.

Amount of the accumulating fund	-	-	-	\$1418	52
Balance in the Treasury for appropriation	-	-	-	360	35
Balance in the hands of the Vice-Treasurer	-	-	-	56	53

A considerable legacy of the late Miss Russell, of Charlestown, the amount of which is not certainly ascertained, is added to the fund.

List of Donations in 1818.

From the Female Cent Society in the second parish in Marlborough	-	-	-	-	\$14	50
From the Cent Society in Concord	-	-	-	-	6	15
From do. do. in Shrewsbury	-	-	-	-	10	
From do. do. in Waltham	-	-	-	-	15	52
From do. do. in Lancaster	-	-	-	-	23	41
From do. do. in Northborough	-	-	-	-	17	
From Ladies of West Church Society, Boston	-	-	-	-	62	
From Houlton plantation, Maine	-	-	-	-	30	
From a Lady in Brighton	-	-	-	-	2	

List of Donations in 1819.

From the young Misses of the North Church Society, Salem	-	-	-	-	\$50	
From Ichabod Tucker, Esq.	-	-	-	-	5	
From the Female Cent Society in Shrewsbury	-	-	-	-	15	
A Friend	-	-	-	-	1	
A Friend	-	-	-	-	1	
Ladies Cent Society Concord	-	-	-	-	14	13

A Lady in Brighton	-	-	-	\$5
Ladies' Cent Society in Waltham	-	-	-	7 65

Officers of the Society.

HON. ISAAC PARKER, L.L.D. *President.*

REV. EZRA RIPLEY, D.D. *Vice-President.*

REV. SAMUEL RIPLEY, *Cor. & Rec. Secretary.*

DEACON JOSIAH BRIDGE, *Treasurer.*

REV. FRANCIS PARKMAN, *Vice-Treasurer.*

ICHABOD TUCKER, Esq. *Assistant Treas. for Essex.*

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Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D.D.	Rev. Isaac Allen,
Hon. Joseph Allen,	Stephen Higginson, Jr. Esq.
Rev. John Foster, D.D.	Rev. Charles Lowell,
Deacon John White,	Ichabod Tucker, Esq.
Rev. Nathl. Thayer, D.D.	Rev. James Kendall,
Deacon Moses Coolidge,	Alden Bradford, Esq.

Standing Committee for Foreign Missions, &c.

Rev. John Foster, D.D.	Professor Sydney Willard,
Rev. John Pierce,	Samuel Parkman, Esq.
Rev. Charles Lowell,	Rev. Mr. Channing.
Rev. A. Bancroft, D.D.	

Executive Committee.

Rev. Charles Lowell,	Nathaniel Thayer, D.D.
Stephen Higginson, Jr. Esq.	Alden Bradford, Esq.
Rev. Samuel Ripley,	

The next annual meeting of the Society will be holden in Boston, on the first Thursday in October, 1820, and the religious exercises will be performed in the West Church. First preacher, Rev. Abiel Abbot, of Beverly; second preacher, Rev. Mr. Channing.

Conversion of the Jews.—The London Society for promoting christianity among the Jews has existed eleven years.
New Series—vol. I. 61

During the last year there was considerable discussion in England, respecting the good effected or likely to be effected by its exertions. Some account of the publications on this subject may be found in the British Critic, from which the following abstract has been made.

The London Society has expended in ten years about 95,000*l.*, and its receipts during the last year amounted to 10,091*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* If we inquire what these ample funds have enabled the Society to perform towards the promotion of its object, we shall be informed by its various reports, that it has opened a Meeting-house for the benefit of those Jews who might be converted, or appeared well disposed for conversion; that it has built an Episcopal Chapel, on Bethnal Green, for the accommodation of those converts, who might prefer the ministrations of the Church of England; that it has established schools in which there are at present 43 boys and 35 girls; and that it has printed an edition of the New Testament in Hebrew. We learn, however, from the same sources of information, that the Meeting-house is shut up, and to be disposed of, as the conversions produced by this Society are henceforth to be conducted on the principles of the Church of England; the society itself having, as it appears, fallen entirely, or in a great measure, under the control of those who style themselves "the Evangelical Party" in the Church. The Episcopal Chapel, on Bethnal Green, continues open, and is, we are informed, well attended; not however by Jews, or by the converts of the Society, who might probably be accommodated within a single pew in any Church,—but by those Christians who usually resort to the Chapels in which an Evangelical clergyman officiates. The schools do not appear to be confined to the children of Jewish parents; not a few others have found admission there; and as for the Hebrew Testament, it would probably have remained as lumber in the ware-room of the Society's printer, had not the Bible Society taken the greater part of the impression *at less than the cost price*; (10th Report, p. 24, 26.*) and the Rev. L. Way and his associates

* We find, by examining this Report, that another and corrected edition is preparing in Stereotype, and that the Society have met with some circumstances of encouragement as well as discouragement. The following anecdote is given: A Polish Jew, residing in this country, but not able to read the English language, was, under God, converted to the faith of Christ by reading the Gospels in the Hebrew tongue, which had been put into his hands by this Society. He made a public profession of his faith by baptism at the Episcopal Jews' Chapel, on the 20th of August last. His conduct since that time has been such as to afford the best hope of his sincerity.

undertaken to distribute a portion of what was left, in their foreign tour. (Report p. 29.)

The Society does not boast much of its success in making converts. Some nominal converts have, however, been made, but the Rev. Author of "a Letter addressed to the Bishop of St. David's," has, we understand, found to his cost, that a converted Jew gains no very clear ideas of Christian honesty by the process; having not only detected these hopeful children in levying contributions upon his silver spoons and such light articles; but having been robbed of the communion plate and surplices of his Church, by the convert who had been appointed to the office of Clerk; and having reason to suspect the same person of a forgery upon his banker to the amount of some hundred pounds.

It is said that the letter of Mr. Way, one of the most zealous friends of the Society, contains admissions of its errors and failures; and he draws the same influences of its being an object of peculiar Divine favour from its *adversity*, which are deduced in regard to the Bible Society from its *prosperity*. This adversity appears to have been owing to strange mismanagement, and not a little to the too great inference of a well known individual, C. F. Frey. While under his auspices, impostors without number were suffered to prey upon the Society; the most shameful immoralities were practised by its pretended converts; the association itself was disgraced, its income was wasted, the royal patronage which had been obtained, withheld, the public interest lost, and the more respectable Jews insulted, and confirmed in their own faith by the misconduct of those who had undertaken to convert them. Thus in seven years 70,000*l.* were expended, the Society was on the verge of bankruptcy, and a radical change became necessary. The management of affairs was transferred from the Dissenters to members of the Episcopal Church, but the change was more nominal than real; it was sometime before even Frey was dismissed, and the general course of measures was but little changed. With respect to the instruments they have employed, it is astonishing how unfortunate or careless they have been in the selection. The immoralities of one are stated to have driven him from the country; another is reported to have been arrested on the charge of forgery, and strongly suspected of sacrilege; a third, the most prominent and active, appears to have deserted his original benefactors, and is charged with having quitted England at last, because detection in practices disgraceful to his moral character rendered his further residence here, or employment by the Society,

impossible. And the fourth is regarded even by his friends with an eye of diffidence.

If we proceed to investigate the conduct of the presumed or pretended converts, the picture will be too disgusting to look upon. If the hitherto uncontradicted narrative of Mr. Goakman be not exaggerated, grievous indeed has been the misapplication of public liberality, and gross the deception of those by whom it has been administered. Even the statements of zealous friends to the Society give little rational ground to hope that they are doing any good. We very much fear that few real Christians have been or will be made. Mr. Abrahams, we suspect, has stated the truth when, adverting to the thousands which have been expended, he says,—‘What have they bought for their money, but deception? Even those outcasts, which the temptation of money has beguiled to enlist under the banners of that Society, would be exceeding happy to return to their own congregation, if they thought they would be accepted.’

We would willingly, says the British Critic, in language we would adopt for our own—we would willingly speak with tenderness of those who have hitherto stood most prominent as the managers of the Society; for, notwithstanding we differ from them respecting the expediency of such an institution, we are always ready to give them credit for a sincere desire to do good, and for an ardent zeal in the prosecution of those designs which they consider to be praiseworthy and beneficial. In regard to the subject in general, it is one of great interest. The apostle’s declaration ‘that his heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved,’ has doubtless been echoed by the wishes of all reflecting Christians; who look forward with laudable anxiety to that predicted time, when it shall please God once more to call them to the knowledge of his truth, and the participation of his favour. It is not surprising accordingly, that many pious and learned men, in every age of the Church, have considered it their duty to attempt the promotion of this work and the hastening of this time. From the days of Justin Martyr, to those of Hoornbeck, Limborch, and Spanheim, and our own incomparable Leslie, a long list of writers might be produced, who have laboured in this well intentioned, but hitherto fruitless, work. For as if to shew that “God only knoweth the times and the seasons,” and that this is a task which he hath especially reserved for himself, the conversion of a Jew has at all times been as rare, as their whole history is wonderful; and however laudable may have been the designs of these writers, or excellent their performances,

they have been utterly unprofitable ; the veil is yet upon the heart of the Jews ; and until it shall please God to remove that judicial blindness, to which, for wise purposes, he has seen fit to condemn them, we have no reason to expect that others will succeed where they have failed.

[N.B.—This article has been in type several months, but excluded by a press of other matter. Later information has been since received, for which we may possibly find place hereafter.]

Massachusetts Peace Society.—The fourth anniversary meeting of this interesting and flourishing society was holden at Boston on the 25th of December. An address was delivered in the evening at the Old South Church, to a very numerous and attentive audience, by John Gallison, Esq. The speaker took an able and eloquent survey of the various causes, which have hitherto operated to counteract the pacific tendencies of the christian religion, and to maintain the custom of war amongst Christians notwithstanding its direct repugnance to their principles ;—and insisted upon the practicability of its final abolition.—After the address, the annual Report was read by the Rev. Noah Worcester, D.D. the corresponding secretary, which comprised a summary history of the origin and progress of the society, and a most encouraging view of its present state and future prospects. We hope, when the Report shall be published, to find room for some of its statements. The lovers of religion and of man must view with unmingled approbation the object of this Institution, and feel the most devout gratitude for the prosperity by which Providence has been thus far pleased to distinguish it.

Theological Seminary in Cambridge.—The annual visitation of the Theological School in Harvard University, took place on November 17th, in presence of a large number of its patrons and friends. The whole number of those pursuing Theological studies in their preparation for the Gospel Ministry, is 38. The following is a list of the subjects upon which exercises were exhibited :

1. The Nature of Divine Justice.
2. The character and design of the Mosaic dispensation.
3. Terms of Christian Communion.
4. The account of miracles said to have occurred when Julian attempted to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem.
5. The doctrines of Augustin concerning grace.
6. On the meaning of 1 Thess. iv. 15.
7. On the evidence from the light of nature of a future retribution.
8. On the author and character of the Book of Job.
9. The conduct and views of the Disciples of Christ before his Crucifixion and after his Ascension.

10. Character of Wakefield's Translation of the New Testament.
11. On the state of the soul immediately after death.
12. On the necessity of the study of Natural Theology.
13. On the means of discovering the Divine will, where revelation is silent.
14. On the supernatural character of our Saviour.
15. On the nature of merit.
16. On the value of the morality of the Gospel as a proof of the divine origin of Christianity.
17. On the evidence of Prophecy.

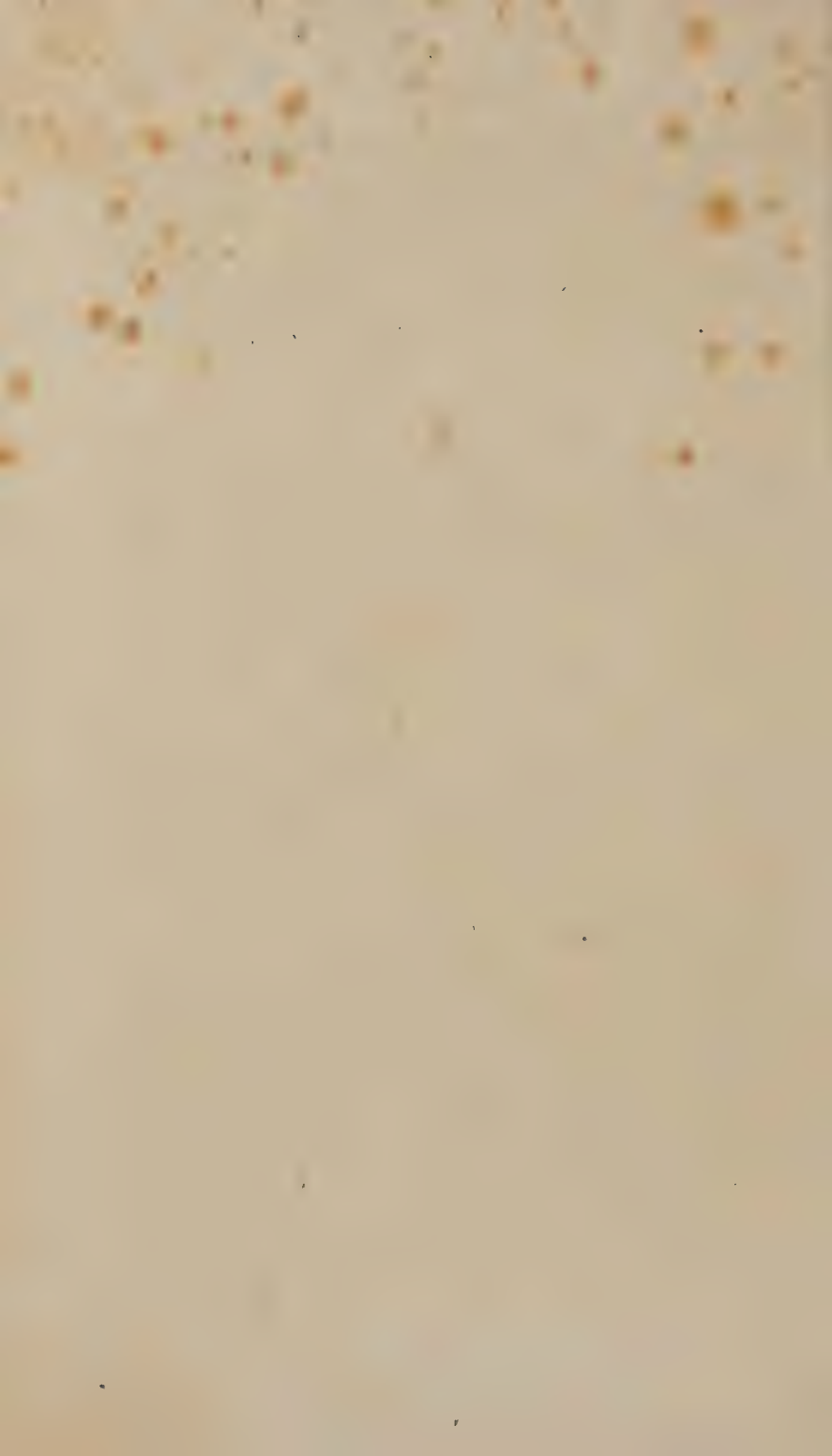
ADDRESS OF THE EDITORS.

The Editors of the *CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE*, close their labours for the year, grateful for the encouragement which they have received, and humbly trusting that they have not laboured in vain. The patronage with which the work has been favoured, has exceeded their expectations, and it affords them satisfaction to find that its circulation is constantly increasing. Animated by their past success, and by their future prospects, they will devote themselves with fresh spirit to the work, in the hope, with the blessing of God, to render it yet more acceptable and more extensively useful.

The uncommon excitement, which has existed, during the past year upon some controverted questions, has unavoidably led them to devote a larger proportion of their pages, than would have been otherwise advisable, to doctrinal discussions. They hope, in future, that there will be less occasion for this. For although they never intend to keep back their opinions on disputed points, yet they never would unnecessarily obtrude them upon these pages which should be sacredly devoted to the holier cause of pious affections and pure living. Those, therefore, who have complained that the share, which controversy has had in the numbers of the last year, has left too little room for subjects in which they feel stronger interest, will probably find less reason for the complaint in time to come.

A different complaint demands attention. It is best stated in the words of a distant correspondent, who says, "With whatever ability the work may be conducted, and however much deservedly admired at present by the higher class of readers, it is not suited to the great mass of country subscribers." The Editors will, in future, give their attention to render the work acceptable and interesting to readers of every class. And they call upon their friends and brethren at a distance, and in all parts, to lend their aid by communications or otherwise, to improve the work, and adapt it better to the wants of the community. The experience of one year, with such aid, may be expected to render the attempt of the second more successful. With new cheerfulness, therefore, anxious to serve, to the best of their abilities, the religious interests of their fellow-christians; asking of them only candor and the love of truth, and looking with humble confidence for the approbation of God; they again address themselves to the work.





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